THE DEIST'S Manual:

OR, A

RATIONAL ENQUIRY

INTO THE

Christian Religion.

With some CONSIDERATIONS on Mr. *Hobbs*, *Spinosa*, the *Oracles of Reason*, *Second Thoughts*, &c.

By C. *Gildon*, Gent. Publisher of the *Oracles of Reason*.

To which is prefix'd a LETTER, from the Author of *The Method with the Deists*.

Humanum est Errare.

LONDON;
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TO THE

Most Reverend Father in God,

HIS GRACE

THOMAS,

By the Divine Providence,

Lord ARCHBISHOP of

CANTERBURY,

Primate of all *England*, &c.

May it Please Your Grace,

HAving, by a just Application to the Study of the following most Important Subject, for

ſome Time, eſcap'd from thoſe Errors, which depriv'd me of that Favour with Your Grace, which I might for other Reaſons have hop'd; I choſe, and have long deſign'd to Publiſh it to the World, under the Protection of Your Grace's Name, whoſe Zeal for Religion, and the good of Your Country, might convince the World of the *Sincerity* of my Undertaking, if the Force of my Arguments ſhou'd not be able to do it, which I am perſwaded are ſo clear, and ſo earneſtly urg'd, that no unprejudic'd Perſon can attribute them to Hypocriſie. I am, beſides,

My Lord, too well known, to my Acquaintance, for an open, and Plain Dealer, to fear the Imputation of a deſigning Man; but as I am perfectly ſatisfied in what I have wrote, ſo I beleive, no Rational man can fairly convince me of the contrary Opinion. But had I weakneſs enough to diſſemble with the World, I ſhou'd have too much Modeſty to preſume, to ſhelter my Hypocriſie under ſo Illuſtrious a Name.

The Errors I had too haſtily entertain'd, when I began to find them out, made me examine into the Reaſon of their prevailing ſo far in the

World, which beſides their Flattery of the Paſſions, and Corporeal Impreſſions, I found to proceed from the Difficulty of the Conviction, which was the defect of the Method of the Defenders of the *Chriſtian* Religion; at leaſt, of thoſe, which I had had the Fortune to meet with, who appeal'd to Arguments, which requir'd more Learning and Application, than moſt of the Perſons affected with the Evil, were Maſters of, or cou'd beſtow; ſince their *Truth* and *Force* depended on the Sincerity, and fullneſs of the Quotations of Authors, which Few underſtood, and Fewer cou'd

have

have Recourſe to. I therefore conſider'd, that what was neceſſary to the *Good* and *Happineſs* of Mankind, muſt be attainable with more Eaſe, and concluded, that God had given us a certain means of arriving at a Knowledge of what he requir'd us to believe. The only way to find this out, I concluded muſt be *REASON*.

I therefore, to proceed without Prejudice, ſuppos'd my ſelf diveſted of all receiv'd Opinions, and put my ſelf under the Conduct of that Guide, which led me from my *own Being* to the Fundamental of all Religion, *GOD*, his *Attributes*, *Providence*, and *the Immortality* of *the*

Soul. For without all theſe, *Religion* cou'd be only *Notion*, and *Deſign*, and from theſe Fundamentals, *Reaſon* eaſily drew the *Laws of Nature*, and *Revelation*, and this without Recourſe to *Authority*, but only by the univerſal Conſent of Man's *Reaſon*, which is always, and every where the *ſame*, as I have prov'd ſufficiently, I hope, in my Book. This Method, my Lord, having brought me to a Poſſeſſion of the *Truth*; I began to reflect, that it might be as ſerviceable to others, who had wander'd like my ſelf, after a falſe *Ignis fatuus* of ill Reaſoning; and this was the Motive of my Publiſhing this Volume.

I know, My Lord, that many have aſſerted, that there are no *Speculative Atheiſts*, yet, My Lord, I cannot agree with thoſe Gentlemen, becauſe my Converſation has frequently afforded me Proofs of the contrary in the *Hobbiſts* of the Times; the very Foundation of whoſe *Syſtem* is *Atheiſm* in Speculation, which I am confident, is entirely defeated in the following Treatiſe. There are beſides, My Lord, a very numerous Party of *Practical Atheiſts*, who (whatever they pretend, like Mr. *Hobbs*, of Magnificent Expreſſions of *God*) are really *Atheiſts* in their Opinions,

as

as well, as Practice. For if they really believ'd a God, and thought *justly* and *truly* of him, they cou'd not Act, as they do.

I mean not here, My Lord, the common Frailties of Life, which every Man, more or less, is subject to, but such pernicious Vices, as are destructive of all *Morality* and *Religion*; and by consequence are dangerous Enemies to the *universal Good*, and *Happiness* of Mankind, which was the Aim of God in the Creation of Man. From these has sprung that detestable *Private Spirit*, which has always ruin'd Nations, and

which

which has ſo large a Dominion in this, that it is to be wiſh'd, that in time it brings us not into the ſame Deſtruction, as it muſt Infallibly do, unleſs ſome *Publick Spirited* Man, like Your Grace, ariſe, and Promote the contrary Virtues.

But if the true Notion of *GOD*, and his *Attributes* were ſpread, and fix'd, this Bane of Humane Society wou'd Vaniſh, and my aim at this I hope will juſtifie my employing ſo large a ſhare of my Book on this Subject.

If I follow'd the general Method of *Dedications*, I ſhou'd here ſum up the ſeveral

veral Virtues, and Excellent Qualifications, which Heaven has beſtow'd on Your Grace; but, My Lord, they are not ſo obſcure, to want a Herald; Your *ZEAL*, and your *CHARITY* have had too many publick Proofs to require it, and I am ſenſible, as Your Grace did them not for the Praiſe of Men, ſo the Praiſe of Men would only diſguſt You.

Beſides the *Solemnity* of the Subject allows not the wantonneſs of *Wit*, or the florid Decorations of a Panegyriſt: The *Patron* therefore, and the *Subject* forbidding all

thoſe

thoſe Efforts, I ſhall only beg Your Grace, to take my following Labour into Your Protection, and permit me to ſubſcribe my ſelf

Your Grace's moſt oblig'd,

Moſt Dutiful, and

Moſt Devoted Servant,

Charles Gildon.

THE

THE PREFACE.

IT is not to Comply with the Mode, that I trouble the Reader with this Preface, but to remove an Opinion, I have formerly too much contributed to, by my defence of a Friend's Death, for whom I had a particular Value, not Imagining, it wou'd have been of that ill Conſequence, which I am afraid it was. I therefore thought my ſelf oblig'd, not only to declare, that I am perfectly convinc'd, that Suicide *is not Lawful, but alſo to ſet down my Reaſons for this Opinion, which I ſhall do by Anſwering all thoſe which I brought there for the contrary.*

I have there reduc'd the whole ſtreſs of the Argument to this Point, *Whether the firſt Law of Nature,* Self-Preſervation, *be ſo Univerſally binding, as never to admit of any Exception, and I proceed to prove, that by the Example of* Codrus, *and others, it is ſometimes a Virtue to Deſtroy our ſelves, or Voluntarily to Sacrifice our Lives for the*

Good

Good of our Country, from this Maxim, That the Publick Good ſhould be Prefer'd to any Particular. *That no body ever diſputed the Power, or Right of taking our ſelves to the War, which is a manifeſt Hazard of our Security, and that Invades our Principle of Self-Preſervation. That Merchandizing at Sea*, &c. *was always thought* Lawful, *tho' that be ſo liable to Death, and Accidents. And that ſince it is granted, that there are ſome Occaſions, and Conjunctures allow'd by all, when we may Lawfully loſe, and hazard our Lives, it remains on our Oppoſers to ſtint their Number, and fix a Rule of our Conduct in that Particular, That every Man may remove himſelf from every Government in Particular, and therefore from all; that no People can oblige their Poſterity by Laws, Acts,* &c.

And laſtly, Since ſome Motives are allow'd for our venturing, at leaſt, if not for haſtening our Death, there is none ſo reaſonable, as the eaſing our ſelves of an unavoidable Pain. For, ſince Life is only Eligible for the Good it brings, 'tis to be rejected, when it offers nothing but Evil.

That the Rule of Self-Preſervation *is never to be broke, I ſhall not here contend, but allow, that by the above-quoted Maxim, it is to be hazarded in Lawful and Juſt War, for the Good of our Country, the Defence of our Liberties,* &c. *But firſt, by that very Maxim,* Suicide *is Unlawful; for this, to gratifie the*

Tyran-

Tyranny of ſome blind particular Paſſion, robs the Publick of a Member, who is oblig'd to regard that more, than himſelf. Beſides, ſince it is againſt the Eternal Laws of Right Reaſon, *or of Nature, to ſuffer any ſuch Uſurpation of any particular Paſſion, certainly all Obedience to that unlawful Power, which we have ſet up, and may, when we will, Depoſe, can never be Lawful.*

That the Enemies of Suicide *ſhou'd ſtint, and declare theſe Motives, is no hard Task; for it is plain, the Principle of* Self-Preſervation *ought never to be broke, but for the Preſervation of that, which ſecures that of every Individual, that is, by promoting, and defending the Preſervation of the whole Community, to which each Particular owes his own Preſervation, and this takes in all that is urg'd about the* Decii, Codrus, Regulus, *&c.*

That every Man has a Right of removing himſelf from one Government, or Nation, to another, in ſo large an Extent, as I ſuppoſe, may admit of a Queſtion; for it has been frequently ſeen, that Kingdoms and Nations have Reclaim'd their own Members, when tranſplanted into other Countries; and if we allow the whole to be greater, and of more Conſideration, than the Part, we muſt allow it the Right to do this. But not to Inſiſt on this, what I propoſe in removing from one Government to another, will never

reach

reach this Case, for still that supposes a setling in some one Nation and Government; and that so he shall still be a Member of Humane Society, and do his Part to contribute to the Good of Mankind some where or other, whereas by destroying himself, he takes himself from all, which is far different from the Instance brought in its Justification, and can therefore draw no force from it.

That we cannot oblige our Posterity by our Laws, and Acts, is so absurd, that I am asham'd to have urg'd it, since were that true, all Government must sink, and Mankind be in a perpetual Anarchy, and Confusion; as having every Day new Governments to form, without ever being able to reap any Benefit from them.

Lastly, That the easing of our selves from an unavoidable Evil, is a Just, and Lawful Motive for Destroying our selves, is partly Answer'd already, by my confining those Motives only to the Publick. But to answer it yet more particularly, we ought, if we pretend to Act like Rational Creatures, to consider, that in all private Griefs, or Evils, we are too apt to consult only our Passions, without making any Enquiry about the Matter of our Reason. For, if on these Occasions, we advis'd with our Reason, that wou'd put an end to the Dominion of that Passion, from whence this Evil or Grief proceeds, by which we should make that uneasiness Vanish, which made Life seem so Burthensome to us. And

the ſinking under Misfortunes, is a Puſillanimity oppoſite to that Fortitude which is enjoin'd us by the Law of Nature, and which is abſolutely neceſſary in Humane Events; for there is no Misfortune, which Virtue cannot overcome, or Fortitude ſupport; there is therefore no Evil ſo great, that can deprive Life of being a Good, ſince all the Evils of Life have this Remedy.

There is no Evil but what proceeds from our Criminal Indulgence *of our Paſſions, which* Self-Preſervation, *and Reaſon Command us to have in perpetual Subjection to the Sway, and Dominion of Reaſon; or elſe to Foreign, and Extrinſick Accidents, and Events, and great part of theſe are never ſo very preſſing, and hard upon us, but either by our Sloth, want of Induſtry,* Pride, *or the like; and when they are in the Extremity, while our Paſſions are in Order, they can never deprive us of the Satisfaction of the Mind, the Contemplation of God, &c. which are Pleaſures ſufficient to prove Life a Good, as long as Providence will permit us to enjoy it. Life therefore, never being an Evil but by our own Faults, there is no Shadow of Reaſon to juſtifie us in throwing it away without a Public Motive.*

But if we paſs from our Reaſon to Religion (which Divine Rule I have prov'd in the following Treatiſe) we have no Pretence at all for Suicide, Thou ſhalt not Kill *is a Com-*

a Commandment in force, in regard of our ſelves as well as others.

I hope I have thus ſufficiently Anſwer'd all thoſe Arguments for an Opinion, the Error of which I am perfectly convinc'd of; and I am perſwaded, that the Peruſal of the following Treatiſe will remove all Doubts in that Particular.

I had ſome Thoughts of beſtowing a few Words on two extraordinary Paradoxes, lately Publiſh'd, one is, That Motion is Eſſential to Matter, *and the other,* That Matter and Motion think. *The Author of the firſt has remov'd the Cauſe of my Anſwering him, by owning its Creation, and ſuppoſing, that God, with its other Properties, endu'd Matter with this likewiſe; tho' I am far from being ſatisfied with the Reaſons of his Opinion, which I cannot perſwade my ſelf to be Convincing; yet, ſince I have nothing to do with that Point, farther than to prove the Creation of Matter, I aquieſce in his Acknowledgment of that Truth, without troubling my ſelf with the uſeleſs Amuſement.*

The other Paradox is couch'd in ſuch Terms that I am ſatisfied, the Ordinary Reader cannot underſtand it, and founded on ſuch weak Arguments, that a Philoſopher will never be Vanquiſh'd by; ſo that the Body of my Book being ſwell'd to a much larger Bulk than I deſign'd it, I ſhall not encreaſe it by a needleſs Diſpute of a Point, which him-

ſelf owns to ſignifie nothing to the Good of Mankind, whether true or falſe.

I have only to add, that I wiſh my Readers may be as perfectly Satisfied in the Peruſing this Treatiſe, as I was in the Writing it.

Humanum eſt Errare ſed Beſtiarum perſeverare. *Cicero.*

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THE INTRODUCTION.

I wiſh, that there was not too juſt a Ground for that ſevere Reflection on the preſent Age, *That Virtue has entirely forſaken theſe Parts of the World*: And that the *Iroquois* had leſs to juſtifie the Anſwer they make, when we perſwade them to *Chriſtianity*, viz. *That they wonder, how the* Chriſtians *can endeavour to Perſwade them to a Religion, which their own Lives and Actions demonſtrate, they do not believe themſelves.* For a Man muſt be very Credulous indeed, to Imagine, that thoſe People could believe the Truth of the *Chriſtian* Doctrines, and the *Rewards* and *Puniſhments* promis'd, and threatn'd to the Obſervation, or Breach of them, and yet be guilty of all manner of Injuſtice to their Friends, as well, as Enemies, and Impieties to that God, and that *Chriſt*, whom they aſſert to be the Deliverers of thoſe Doctrines, which their Practice diſ-believes, or contemns.

Theſe are Remarks indeed, too ſhocking to Dwell on, and too true to deny. But yet the Defect of the *Practice* is no Argu-

ment of the Defect of the *Principles.* And tho' the Reaſon of moſt Men is not ſtrong enough to work them into *Action*, yet no Man's is ſo weak, as not to ſee their demonſtrative Excellence. And tho' Vice be ſo Impudent to thruſt it ſelf forward to the View, and Eye of the World, by its Dominion over too many of the Men of *Action*; yet, I hope, there are not a Few (tho' not ſo Obvious) who have not bow'd the Knee to *Baal*, nor abandon'd the chaſte and ſincere Beauties of Virtue, for the falſe Allurements, and Harlot Charms of Vice.

I hope I ſhall give an Inſtance of one in the following Account, who might juſtly, and in the whole Extent of the Word, be term'd an *Honeſt Man*, that is, one *who lov'd God above all things, and his Neighbour, as himſelf*, and was by Conſequence a good Chriſtian, a good Patriot, and a good Friend.

His younger Days were not ſpent in a Lazy, Inactive Contemplation, but in the Service of his Country, and his Acquaintance, in doing good Deeds, both *Publick* and *Private*, which is certainly the trueſt Devotion, and moſt pleaſing to God, as being the greateſt, and moſt infallible Proof of a perfect, and lively Faith, teſtify'd by his Works. For our *Saviour* has reſolv'd all our Duty into *Action*, making what we *do* the diſtinctive Mark betwixt a Hypocrite, and a ſincere Believer, when he tells us, that *not every one who ſays to me, Lord! Lord! ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the Will of my Father, who is in Heaven.* The plain

and

and obvious Senſe of which is, that Practice and Action are neceſſary to Salvation; for indeed, the worſt of Men (like the *Phariſees* of Old) may make more Noiſe, and more dazzle the Eyes of the ill Judging World, with a loud, formal Devotion, and a falſe, oſtentatious Faith, than the beſt of Chriſtians, whoſe Practice and Belief bear Witneſs for each other to the tremendous *Diſcerner of Hearts*; with whom only the truly Good Men are accepted, who reduce his Commandments to *Practice*.

Such was our Hero, ſuch from his Youth; and ev'n now, when Old Age had robb'd him of that Vigour, and Strength of Body, which was neceſſary for thoſe Fatigues, which his Virtue perpetually Engag'd him in, he ſtill continu'd his Zeal for the Advancement of the Glory of God, the Good of his Country, and Benefit of his Neighbour. This was the Reaſon, that he ſought not the pleaſing Receſſes of a Country Retirement, there to throw off all Thoughts of every one but himſelf, but made Choice of the City of *London* for his Reſidence, as a Scene more Productive of Accidents, Errors and Vices, injurious to Man's preſent and future Happineſs, and by Conſequence yielding greater, and more frequent Opportunities of his being beneficial to Man, and ſerviceable to God, and to his Holy Religion.

His Mornings were conſign'd to Devotion, and Study, and thoſe parts of the Afternoons, which were neceſſary to unbend the great Intenſeneſs of his Mind, he ſpent in ſuch

Places of Reſort, as promis'd the faireſt and moſt frequent Occaſions of promoting of Virtue.

'Twas in one of the Coffee-Houſes he us'd, that he accidentally fell into a Converſation with *Pleonexus*, a ſordid Miſer, who had by a very falſe Maxim liv'd miſerably *Poor*, to die *Rich*; with whom, after a Diſcourſe of Indifferent Matters he inſenſibly ſlid into Obſervations on the Folly of *Avarice*, which he took care to Repeat, as often as Chance, or Cuſtom brought them together, but ſtill with ſo artful a Turn, as not to diſguſt him with an Acquaintance, he might elſe think wou'd prove Injurious to a Vice, of which he was ſo Infinitely fond.

CHRISTOPHIL (for by that Name we muſt know our *Honeſt Man*) in the ſame Place, pick'd out another Patient, who was not in a much leſs deſperate Condition, than *Pleonexus*, whoſe Temper, notwithſtanding, gave much more hopes of a Cure. His Malady proceeded from want of Education, and a Series of ill Converſation, join'd with the hot Thoughtleſsneſs of Youth. Theſe had Infected him with the wild Notions of *Atheiſm*. His Life was a Circle of Drunkenneſs, and Debauchery, and therefore he ſtruck in with Principles, that ſo much flatter'd his deprav'd Inclination, which Thought, and juſter Notions forbad the Indulging. As ſoon as he roſe (which was generally about three, or four in the Afternoon) his Cuſtom was, to come to that Place, to allay the Fumes, and Aches of the laſt Night's Debauch, with Coffee,

ſee, and this being the Hour of *Chriſtophil*'s Reſort, often Engag'd him in Diſcourſes againſt the Folly of a looſe and thoughtleſs Life, full of long Pains, with but ſhort Intervals of very unſincere Pleaſures, and noiſie Diverſions. On which he reflected in Terms ſo agreeable, and with a Railery ſo Juſt, and Poignant, that he often ſo far touch'd the young Gentleman, as to win him from his Tavern Companions to a ſober Evening, and a Regular Hour. For he liſten'd to *Chriſtophil* with an Attention, that witneſs'd good Senſe, and a Friend to *Truth*, when he had the Opportunity of hearing it. I ſhall therefore here call him *Philalethes*.

Chriſtophil having thus lightly play'd on both their Follies with the Air of Wit and Pleaſantry, and by treating *Pleonexus* ſometimes with a Diſh of Coffee, gain'd his Intimacy, thought it now high time to begin to be Serious, and to attempt in good Earneſt the Converſion of both the Practical, and Speculative Atheiſt.

To this End he Invited both of them to a Houſe he had a little way out of Town; to have by that means, an uninterrupted Opportunity of Compleating ſo good a Deſign. Both very readily accepted the Invitation. *Philalethes*, becauſe he began to have a particular Regard for *Chriſtophil*, and *Pleonexus*, becauſe he hop'd by this means to ſave his Daily Expences, and live well at another Man's Coſt.

The Day appointed comes, the Company is

Coach'd, and one Summer's Day brings them to their Journey's End. The Fatigue of which being over, and his Guests having taken a View of the Country thereabouts, and a Taste of all the Innocent Pleasures it afforded, (to put them in the more easie Humour) *Christophil* one Day propos'd their Retiring into a Grotto in his Garden, as the most agreeable Place to pass away the hottest Hour, or two of the Day. The Motion was approv'd by his Guests, who being now Seated, *Philalethes* taking Occasion from the Place, began the Praises of that Country; the fine Structure, Situation, and Prospect of the House; the beautiful Contrivance of the Gardens, and the Generosity, and Freedom of the Entertainment; concluding with a Panegyrick of the noble Hospitality of *Christophil*'s Temper. But *Pleonexus*, ev'n in his Praise, shew'd a Miser's Soul, not approving the very Generosity he had the Benefit of, which threw *Philalethes* on an Invective against Avarice; which was as vehemently oppos'd by *Pleonexus* in a violent Declamation against Prodigality, for so he call'd every thing but a Miserly Parsimony. He particularly harangu'd it against the Thoughtless Debauches of Youth, and preferr'd the Pleasure of getting Money, to that of spending it, according to the manner of the Wits of the Town. After some time had been spent in this Dispute, *Christophil* interpos'd in this manner.

You are both in the Right (said *Christophil*) where you attack the Follies, and Vices of either Youth, or Age. 'Tis extreamly true, that the Follies of Youth, in a Thoughtless,

leſs, Debauch'd Life, are contrary to Reaſon; nor is it leſs true, that thoſe of Age, in a blind Avarice, are below a Man. That both may perhaps find a Private and Temporary Satisfaction, I will not here Controvert; Nor is it ſo eaſie to decide in Favour of either, if, as *Philalethes* ſuppoſes, there be no God; for it will be a hard Matter to convince us, which is the greateſt, or the nobleſt Pleaſure, and the moſt Rational Aim, and Conduct of Life (without owning a God) as to prove, which is the beſt and nobleſt of Food, when every Palate will at laſt be its own Judge, and prefer that moſt, which pleaſes moſt, and with Reaſon too, ſince Nature has given ſuch a Variety of Taſtes, and ſet no Standard of Excellence among them.

But if you once (as every Rational Man muſt) admit a *God*, he ſets an Infallible Standard of Excellence in all our Actions. For by admitting him, you deſtroy Avarice, Drunkenneſs, and all manner of Debauchery, and Exceſs. For that always is contrary to *Reaſon*, and by Conſequence diſ-allow'd by God himſelf; who, in his Infinite Goodneſs and Wiſdom, has given us that Guide, to conduct us in all our Actions, and by that, has made us Judges of even his own *Law*, and *Exiſtence*. For it is by *REASON*, that we have any *Notice* of *God*, and Reaſon, that Demonſtrates that Being, with *equal* Evidence proves the high Juſtice of his Laws, and the Folly, and Injuſtice of our breaking

them, either to God, our Neighbour, or our ſelves.

I am glad (replied *Philalethes*) to hear, you declare ſo much for *Reaſon* in theſe Enquiries. For there is nothing ſo ſhocking to a Man of Senſe, as to hear, that he muſt firſt ceaſe to be a Man, before he can be a good *Chriſtian*: And I muſt be ſo free with you, as to aſſure you, that nothing has more encreas'd the Number of *Deiſts*, than this Profeſs'd Enmity to *Humane Reaſon*.

It is the Glory of the Proteſtant Religion (return'd *Chriſtophil*) that, in it, you muſt not ceaſe to be a Man, to be a good *Chriſtian*: But on the contrary you become more a Man, exert the higheſt Efforts of *Reaſon*, and exalt it to almoſt a Divine Perfection. Here it is like the *Ethnic*'s Golden Chain faſten'd to the Chair of *Jupiter*, or rather like *Jacob*'s *Ladder*, reaching up to the *Empyreal* Heav'n, while on its Rounds the Soul Aſcends to its Divine Original, and Omnipotent Maker, opening a Paſſage to him by a Pure, Holy, and Soveraignly Rational Religion. Our Church deſtroys not the Fundamentals of *all Religion*, *REASON*, but raiſes it to the higheſt Perfection, that it is capable of in this World: And thus binds us to God, with an Indiſſoluble Knot, which cannot be loos'd, but by cutting it violently aſunder with the Sword of a moſt Perverſe Folly.

If

If ever you make me a Convert (reply'd *Philalethes)* it muſt be by *Reaſon.* For take that away, and what abſurd Opinion is not Juſtifiable? Or what Mark is there indeed of Abſurdity at all. It puts all Opinions on the ſame bottom, by depriving them of that Certainty, which is abſolutely neceſſary for the ſatisfying the Humane Mind. It levels Wiſdom and Folly; Vice and Virtue; Man and Beaſt.

Had you been in all things (rejoin'd *Chriſtophil)* ſo Faithful to *Reaſon*, you wou'd not need at this time, any Arguments to convince you of thoſe Errors, nothing cou'd Betray you to, but a Rebellion againſt your Reaſon.

I confeſs (interrupted *Philalethes)* that I have been too much a Truant in my Reflections on a Point, ſo worthy a ſerious Conſideration, as the Being of a God; and I may, perhaps, by a too Criminal Levity of Youth, taken up with the firſt Appearances, that ſtruck in with thoſe darling Follies, that bore me away; but, Sir, thus much of the Man, I yet retain, to know, that I ought not to ſurrender my ſelf to any Opinion, that is not Juſtifiable by *Reaſon.*

No, no, *Philalethes* (ſaid *Chriſtophil)* far be it from me to exclude Reaſon from our Religious Enquiries; for that has open'd a way for the Introducing the Innovations of Deſigning Men, and their Impoſing

fing their Notions on the World, as the Dictates of the *Holy Spirit*. That has rais'd all the Schisms, Wars, and Devastations, that have happen'd these Seventeen Hundred Years on account of Religion; and converted the *Gospel* of Peace into a *Gospel* of Blood and Destruction. But *REASON* brings all Opinions to the Sacred and Infallible Test of the *Word of God*, and the Divine Attributes; for, whatever Clashes with those, are absolutely false, nay cannot possibly be true, but plainly discover the Impetuous Passions of Men.

Reason certainly (interrupted *Philalethes*) never deceives, nor is deceiv'd.

If justly follow'd (said *Christophil*) and unbiass'd by any Prejudice, or Passion; for then it will know when to decide, and when to submit; for, as St. *Austin* says, *Reason would never submit, did it not find, that there was some Just Cause for its Submission; and it is but Just, that it submit, when it Judges it self, that it ought to do so. For if Reason never submitted*, says Mr. *Pascal*, *there would be nothing Supernatural, or Mysterious in Religion, and if it never was to be Judge, Religion would be Absurd, and Ridiculous.*

I take this first Part (said *Philalethes*) to be laid down as a *Salvo* for *Transubstantiation*, and some other Tenets of the *Roman* Church. I hope you are not for Muzzling up Reason, when you think it against

againſt you, and then letting it looſe, when agreeable to the Opinions you have a Mind to advance? At that rate, it is a ready Anſwer to the Objectors againſt the moſt abſurd Superſtitions, that here *Reaſon* muſt ſubmit, it is *Supernatural*, and *Myſterious*. It touches not me at all, to hear in their Declamations, theſe *Muzzlers* of Reaſon tell us, that our Reaſon cannot diſcover the Cauſes of common Appearances in Nature, when I am under no Obligation, much leſs under ſo great a one, as Eternal Salvation, to believe aright of them; they are things that contribute not at all to my Happineſs, either here, or hereafter; and therefore 'tis wholly indifferent to me, what they are.

I ſhall ſhow you, (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) in its proper Place, that *Reaſon* is not forſaken in the moſt *Myſterious* Part of our Holy Religion. Nay, that Reaſon judges of that Myſterious Part, and fixes, and juſtifies our Belief of it. But to do it now, wou'd be to anticipate what is more proper for a *Chriſtian* to hear, than for one, that is not yet arriv'd to the Knowledge of a *God*. Of which, when I have convinc'd you, made him manifeſt to you, as far as he has allow'd *Reaſon* to reveal him; demonſtrated the Immortality of the Soul; let you ſee the Law of Nature, and prov'd to you the Divinity of the *Chriſtian Religion* in general, and look'd into Particulars, I ſhall plainly Demonſtrate to you the *Reaſonableneſs* of the *Myſterious* Part

Part of Religion, without making it ceaſe to be *Myſterious.* For to what Purpoſe wou'd it be for me to talk to you about the *Myſteries* of the *Chriſtian Religion*, before you are ſatisfy'd of the very Fundamental of all Religions, *GOD*? To which I ſhall now advance.

When you have prov'd that, (interrupted *Philalethes)* conſider'd the Soul, taken a View of the Law of Nature, and built the Chriſtian Religion in general on this Bottom; I do not ſee, that I am ever the nearer the End of my Search, but muſt fall again to a State of Infidelity, or, at leaſt, of an Inſuperable Uncertainty, what Faith amidſt ſo vaſt a Variety I ſhall chooſe; ſince they Claſh with one another, as much as with Infidelity it ſelf, whilſt each delivers its Oppoſite to the Devil. So that after all your Pains, and your curious Diſquiſitions, I may be as far from Heaven, as at preſent. Beſides, if the Enquiry into the *Chriſtian Religion* be as difficult, as all the Defenders of it, that I have met with, make it, it is far greater, than I can ever hope to ſurmount.

You ſuppoſe the Difficulty far greater (anſwer'd *Chriſtophil)* than it is; and if you were a Lover of *Truth*, you wou'd not think the Fatigue of attaining her a Burthen ſo great, as you ſeem to apprehend it; eſpecially, a *Truth*, on which ſo much depends, as on that of Religion, *viz.* Your Happineſs both here, and hereafter.

A Bribe worthy of all your Pains, and Labour to obtain.

I grant it (reply'd *Philalethes*) if at laſt attainable. But if, as it has hitherto been made, our Enquiry into Religion require ſo voluminous a Search, ſo critical a Skill in ſo many Languages, to judge truly of the Quotations and Authorities, how ſhall I, who know no Language but my own, who am Ignorant of all the Subtilties of the School, and the nice Diſtinctions of Philoſophy, and Divinity, and Millions more with me, who want both Ability and Time to go through the Enquiry, ever hope to arrive at the End? And if that Enquiry be not neceſſary, but an entire Dependance on our Teachers, all that is requir'd, that Juſtifies the Wrong, as well as the Right Opinion; for there is ſcarce any Religion ſo abſurd, which the Teachers have not ſome ſpecious Arguments to defend, and thoſe very Cogent, when back'd with the Force, and Prejudice of Education; as is evident from the Followers of all the Sects at this very Day.

Your Difficulty is reaſonable (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) and has been us'd by many well-minded Men, and more urg'd by thoſe, who catch hold of any thing, that may render the Enquiry into Truth difficult, and unſurmountable. The *Deiſts* have Argu'd, that is contrary to our Reaſon to believe, that to be in the *Right Faith* is ne-

neceſſary to *Salvation*, and yet, that it ſhould be almoſt Impoſſible, fairly to arrive at a perfect Knowledge of which is *Right*, and which is *Wrong*, without Peruſing all the Controverſies ſince the Riſe of *Chriſtianity*; for this wou'd be, (ſay they) to make God unjuſt, in requiring Things from us, which we cannot Perform. For, (continue they) either a *True Faith* is neceſſary to Salvation, or it is not; if *not*, then it matters not what we believe, and by Conſequence, *all* Religions are *Indifferent*. If it be *Neceſſary*, then God muſt in his Juſtice, have given us an abſolute Certainty in Judging of all, to diſtinguiſh the *Right* from the *Wrong*, and that to every one of the Ignorant as well, as to the Learned.

Firſt, I might tell you, (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) that thoſe who are good Chriſtians, never Judge People of any Religion, but allow to all, that believe in Chriſt *Jeſus* our Lord, the Benefit of his Death, if they keep his Commandments, But I will give you a very pla in and eaſie Method of Enquiry, without running over all thoſe Volumes of the Fathers, and the Controverſies of all Ages, which ſeem ſo much to Alarm you. For all theſe Controverſies ſprung from Men's Comments on that Word of God, which we have yet to peruſe without them, and from which alone, I ſhall convince you of the Certainty, and Excellence of the *Chriſtian* Religion, and that in ſo ſhort a manner, as to lead you through the

the whole in a few Hours Conference. And 'tis hard if every Man has not ſo much time to beſtow on a Thing of ſo great an Importance.

That indeed (reply'd *Philalethes*) is worth our Hearing, and I am not ſuch a Prodigal of my Time, as not to be Maſter of ſo much, for ſo Uſeful and Noble an End. And if you make out all this, I ſhall have reaſon to Bleſs the Accident, that brought me acquainted with you.——— But you ſee we have already talk'd *Pleonexus* aſleep.

Here is, alas! a Proof (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) of the Curſe of Avarice! How dull is a Miſer to all things, that are worthy the Thoughts of a Man?

What ho! *Pleonexus*, (cry'd out *Philalethes*, and ſhook him) aſleep! Is your Zeal for the Reformation of others ſo ſtrong, and your Care for the Reforming your ſelf ſo weak!

Pleonexus attempting to make ſome Excuſe, *Chriſtophil* Propos'd to remove to a Pleaſing Arbour, that ſurvey'd the whole Garden, and the Fields around it, and where a gentle Breeze of Wind had free Acceſs, which might enliven, and drive away thoſe Drowſie Vapours, which might elſe oppreſs *Pleonexus*, during a Diſcourſe, that was not the moſt Entertaining to him. To this Place therefore,

fore, they Adjourn'd their Diſpute. Being arriv'd there, and ſeated, it was agreed, to begin with the Proof of a Deity. That being allow'd on all hands the Foundation of all Religion.

THE

THE Deists MANUAL, OR, A Rational Enquiry into the *Christian Religion.*

The First DISCOURSE.

That there is a God.

Philalethes (said *Christophil*) you, that are so intirely govern'd by your Reason, pray let us hear you justifie your self, that you can so much, as doubt the Being of a God, and yet pretend to Reason? I confess to me there seem so many, and such gross Absurdities in this Infidelity, that I cou'd never perswade my self, that any Man in his right Senses, cou'd ever entertain so wild a Notion.

I have, you know (return'd *Philalethes*) confeſs'd my neglect of a through Enquiry into this Point, and my Eaſineſs in taking up Opinions moſt favourable to the irregular Pleaſure, I was led away to, by the Impetuoſity of my Youth, and Temper, and the faſhionable Mode of my Converſation. Yet that I may the better be convinc'd, and remove all the Scruples I have had, as to the Exiſtence, and Providence of a *Deity*, I ſhall freely propoſe them.

The way indeed (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) to arrive at perfect Health, is to Probe the Wound to the Bottom; and the way to be ſecure from a Relapſe is to go through ſuch a Courſe, as may wholly remove all Remains of the Diſtemper. But as I ſhall expect attention from you, ſo I promiſe a free unprejudic'd hearing of what you have to ſay.

I beg you *Philalethes* (interrupted *Pleonexus*) to be Cautious in your Expreſſions, and avoid that Prophaneneſs and Blaſphemy, I am affraid a Subject of this nature will occaſion. 'Tis true I wou'd willingly hear, what you can ſay on ſo difficult a Point, but I wou'd have a Decency, and Decorum obſerv'd, as far as a perfect Liberty of the Enquiry will bear.

Alas! *Pleonexus* (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaks. You are covetous of ſuch a Refuge of your Actions from the Fear and Dread of an All-ſeeing, and juſt Power; and, like the *Epecureans*, you complain of us, that defend the Exiſtence of a *Providential Deity*, becauſe, *We impoſe on your Necks an Eternal Lord, whom you muſt fear Night and Day; for who won'd not be afraid of a God, that is ſo curious and buſie*

buſie (to uſe their Phraſe) that He ſees, conſiders, and obſerves all things, Imagining all things to belong to himſelf. Itaque impoſuiſtis in cervicibus noſtris ſempiternum Dominum, quem dies, ac noctes timeremus. Quis enim non timeat omnia providentem & cogitantem & animadvertentem, & omnia ad ſe pertinere putantem curioſum, & plenum negotijs Deum. They are the words of *Velleius* the *Epicurean* in *Cicero*'s *Nature of the Gods*. So neceſſary a Conſequence did the Pagan *Atheiſt* think the *Fear* of God to be of his Providence. Since therefore the Speculative *Atheiſts* of Old were ſenſible, that a Belief of Providence naturally produc'd the fear of God, we muſt conclude that our practical *Atheiſts* do not believe a God, or his Providence.

I confeſs (ſaid *Philalethes*) that motive is one of the ſtrongeſt for our Opinion; for the rational Aim of a Man's Life being Pleaſure, and Happineſs, how can he enjoy one quiet Moment, when he believes, that all his Actions, every word, nay and his very Thoughts are perpetually expos'd to the View of an Omnipotent Being; who, as he has the Power, may have the Will to puniſh us for what we think, and what the Mode, and Cuſtom of the World has now made, meer Gallantries and Qualifications of a Gentleman.

To remove this uneaſineſs therefore, and that with reaſon, I think there is no need to have Recourſe to that Being, which you call God, when that, which you require him for, may rationally be done without him. The World and Man, are the two things, whence the beſt Arguments are drawn, for the Exiſtence of a Deity. But firſt how cou'd God, whom you ſuppoſe a

pure Spirit, act on matter ſo far, as to give it its Formation, Order, and Motion? Can we not with much more Eaſe carry our Mind into the Immenſe, and unbounded Extenſion of Space, where enlarging it ſelf, and conſidering it with a juſt Intenſneſs, after it has travell'd far and wide, it will find no ſhoar, or Boundary whereon to reſt it ſelf. In this vaſt unbounded ſpace of Latitudes, Longitudes, and Altitudes are flying about in a continual Motion, a ſort of little, and almoſt imperceptible Bodies, ſome Sharp, ſome Pointed, ſome Round, ſome Angled, ſome Crooked, and as it were with little Clawes. Now granting this Motion, will any one deny, that it is poſſible, that in the Proceſs of eternal Duration, theſe Atomes, by their Nature tenacious of what they caught hold of, might by degrees form this World, and bring it into this Order, in which we now behold it. Here was need of no Scaffolding, no Architect to build this mighty Fabrick, no Divine Energy to reduce it to Form; Nature did the work aſſiſted by Chance, who every day produce new Worlds, in that vaſt extended ſpace, which has no End, and which admits no Bounds.

Now as for Man, *Lucretius* (for my reading, which I'm oblig'd to the Celebrated Tranſlation) furniſhes a very pretty Conjecture of his being produc'd by the Earth like Plants. But why might it not be the Effect, of the ſame Cauſe which gave the greater World its Being. Or might he not be generated by the Sun and the Earth? We ſee daily ſeveral Animals are ſo: And who can tell the ſecret Nature of things? But till we do know that, I can ſee no Reaſon why it ſhould follow, that becauſe we know not how it is, therefore it is not.

But

But admitting, that theſe ſuppoſitions, how plauſible ſoever, ſhou'd not be true; yet give me leave to add a Conſideration, which I conceive not very eaſy to anſwer. What if this World was Eternal? Had no beginning, and by Conſequence ſhall have no End? Is there any one, that can confute the Opinion? Who was preſent at the Foundation of the Univerſe? And who will boaſt themſelves more Ancient, than the World with any hopes of being believ'd? But to be a credible witneſs of the World's Creation, it is neceſſary, that he had a Being before the World was, which is too abſurd an Opinion to paſs on the moſt Ignorant.

Then for *Man*—you aſſert, that Humane-kind, that now inhabits the Earth did not always exiſt, as all Hiſtories make appear, for there is no Hiſtory of any Nation, that does not give a Beginning to Man, this they not only teſtify but imply the ſame thing by the Series of what they deliver, for there is no Hiſtory, that pretends to give an Account, of above 6000 years or there abouts.

This being the firſt ſtep of your Progreſſion, which remov'd, all the reſt falls to the Ground, give me leave to tell you, that every Thing, that is not ſelf-evident ſhou'd be prov'd or rejected, but this, that is laid down for your Foundation, is ſo far from ſelf-evident, that it admits of a very conſiderable Controverſy: For tho' all the Chronology we have does not go beyond that number of years; yet this cannot take in all Nations: And if it did the Argument in my Opinion, is not of a ſufficient Force, ſince it is not improbable, that there may have been Hiſtories

which run up vaſtly farther, tho' now loſt; a Hundred Thouſand Volumnes, perſhing (as I have read) in one Library at once in *Ægypt*; and what Accounts of things might we have had among them? We have ſcarce any Hiſtory of that once Powerful and Noble City of *Carthage*, for of its Riſe and Groath, we have meer Conjecture or plain Fables, and that very little, which we do know of it, we have from the *Roman* Writers (I having read all of them, that are in the *Engliſh* Tongue) and what we find there for the moſt part is but what relates to thoſe Wars and Negotiations it had with that people. If a *Roman* Conqueſt was ſufficient ſo intirely to ſuppreſs the Records of ſo great a Nation; what may we not expect from the voracious Teeth of an infinite Number of years, or the Ravages of Nations much leſs poliſh'd, and Curious?

But perhaps many ancient People keep no Records at all, as we find both in *Affrica* and *America* at this day: And the uncertainty of the Greek Chonology before the *Olympiades* ſhows us, that they came but late to a regular Obſervation of Time. Nor can the *Roman* Hiſtories give us any Aſſurance, or Certainty, when, or by Whom *Rome* was Built. *Livy* tells us by *Romulus*, and *Remus*, *Saluſt* ſays by the *Trojans* and concludes it uncertain. I know that, as to the Time of its Foundation they are more poſitive, beginning their *Æra* from the building of their City, tho' I cannot think, there can be an abſolute Certainty of their Computation, ſince, to be ſure, that was begun ſeveral years after its Foundation. For a People collected from the moſt Ignorant, and moſt Profligate part of the ſurrounding Nations

tions, cou'd have little Conſideration of things of this Nature, till Time and the Benefit of civil Society, had refind their Manners, and Underſtanding.

But I think it is a weak Argument, becauſe we know nothing before the date, of theſe Six Thouſand years, that therefore there was nothing before. For ſince our Correſpondence with *China*, Records have been diſcover'd of four, or 6000 years more ancient date, than our Creation of the World; and who knows but, that ſome other Nations may be found out hereafter, that may go farther, and ſo on? Nay the *Chineſe* themſelves in a Traditional Account tell us, that the Poſterity of *Panzen*, and *Panzona* inhabited the Earth 90000 years; the *Bramins*, of *Guzerat* ſaid in the year 1639, that there had paſt 326669 Ages, each conſiſting of a certain Number of years. Nay the *Ægyptians* in the Time of King *Amaſis*, who was Contemporary with *Cyrus*, had the Records and Story of 13000 years, and a Succeſſion of 330 Kings, which ſhews that, they were not Lunary years.

But you may ſay, that after all theſe extended Accounts they ſtill ſettle ſome Beginning of the World. I grant that they pretend not to have Records of more, but it follows not from thence, that there had been no other Ages before, whoſe Records, if they kept any, were loſt. Nay it was impoſſible to find Materials to convey down all the Records of a never beginning World, if the ſeveral perpetual Revolutions, the Earth has been always Subject to, had ſpar'd them. But the Inhabitants of the Earth, have continually chang'd their Abodes from one part of it to another.

other. And in those Removals have destroy'd all the Records and Footsteps of the People, that possess'd those Regions before them. Besides the Sea, and Earth, have in Process of Time chang'd Places, and so swept away those Memorials of past Times, that the Ravages of Men had left. So that in the Destruction of People, and Countries, these several ways, it is no wonder that all Records are lost, nay it was impossible to preserve them.

Lastly the Languages, and Characters altering, they cou'd have been of no use to Posterity, if they had escap'd the the Havock of Time. Thus it is, in the Kingdom of *Triguemaen* in the hither *Ethiopia* in *Africa*, wherein the City of *Caxumo* there are now *Obelisks* full of engrav'd Characters which none of the *Africans* can read, as there are also in the Coast of *Sofola*.

Thus if the World may either be made from a fortuitous Concourse of Atoms, that is the several particles of Matter joining themselves together; (for I can't conceive but that you must grant matter, at least Eternal, *for out of Nothing, Nothing comes*) or if the World may be thought Eternal from what I have said, I have justify'd my Opinion. But if my Arguments are not built on a solid Ground, I shall be glad to correct my Errour by hearing it confuted, and Juster and more certain Notions advanc'd, and prov'd by you (O *Christophil*!) Whose Gravity, Goodness and years, have led you to a more strickt Enquiry into these matters.

I protest (assum'd *Pleonexus*) I did not think, there were such cogent Arguments for a Thing, that, at its first proposition, seem'd so very absur'd.

And

And as one Accident often produces another, ſo theſe Reaſons of *Philalethes* have given Occaſion to me to call to Mind ſome Doubts, I have had in Relation to this Matter, which I alſo will propoſe, if it ſeem agreeable to *Chriſtophil*, and he be not already burthen'd with difficulties not eaſily to be remov'd.

We eaſily give Credit (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) to what we deſire, *Pleonexus* after a Life of ſo many years Continuance, cou'd never be taken, with ſuch light, and ſuperficial Reaſonings, as only can amuſe a Boy, or ſuch, as *Philalethes* confeſſes himſelf to have been, a Thoughtleſs Receiver of Poſitions agreeable to the Manner of his living.

Pardon me Sir (anſwer'd *Pleonexus*) and hear what I have to ſay, and then judge of my Credulity. For tho' I believe a God, yet it will not be amiſs to expoſe thoſe Difficulties, which occur about it leaſt they ſhou'd grow, and ſtrengthen by remaining, and take too firm a Root, to be eaſily hereafter eradicated. I confeſs, I have Paſſions, and Paſſions perhaps, as violent as other Men, and theſe give me Reaſon to think, that we are more indebted to Chance, than to a wiſe, and Omnipotent Providence for our Creation.

What have we in us (our Minds I mean, taking the moſt Noble part for the whole,) that ſhou'd make us think our Original better? We have Paſſions which maſter our weak Reaſoning againſt them, nay which compel, and range all the Power and Force of Reaſon on their ſide, to juſtifie their Gratification. *Reaſon*, that perhaps argued ſo warmly againſt them in their Abſcence, with a ſervile Treachery turns to their ſide, as ſoon, as they appear. *Reaſon* therefore

which

which is never Conſiſtent with it ſelf, and always different in each Man, tho' you count it the greateſt Benefit beſtow'd on Mankind what is it? Does it not juſtifie All, that is Ill? When any Man thinks fit, either for Pleaſure, or Profit, to tranſgreſs the Bounds of our ſuppoſs'd Duties, *Reaſon* is ready to defend the Offence both to the Tranſgreſſor and to the Publick, excuſing the Error, and juſtifying the Miſchief: And in moſt Points indeed, the Circumſtances of humane Affairs in the Cuſtoms, Manners, Intereſts and Inclinations of the People, the *Wrong* has infinitely the more invincible Motives, to be Embrac'd, than the *Right*: I mean, than what ſome Men have call'd the *Right*. For the Buiſy, and active part of Mankind; thoſe that thrive in, and have a ſhare in governing the World, ſee things with a much different View, from thoſe, who only depend upon the Dreams of Contemplation, and ſo form ſingular, impractical, and melancholly Notions of *Right* and *Wrong*, which never have, nor ever can be brought into the Practice of Mankind,

I will not here examine, which of the two are in the Right, but granting what I ſuppoſe, you will inſiſt on, that the Practice of the World is not the Rule, to draw the Precepts of Morality by, yet you muſt grant me this, that all this Confuſion of *Right* and *Wrong*, is owing to your magnify'd REASON. Which you cannot deny therefore, to be the Source of all the Wickedneſs, and all the Diſquiets, which every where and in all Circumſtances, render the Life of Mankind ſo very unhappy. Theſe Evil effects of *Reaſon*, every Houſe, every Town, every Nation

tion is extreamly ſenſible of, every Family, every Community feels it; and of which the Pulpit, the Bar, the Camp, and the Court, each day afford us freſh Inſtances. In ſhort all Humane-kind may obſerve, that as Reaſon directs us to *Right*, ſo it miſleads us to *Wrong*. To the firſt it guides *Few* and *Seldom*, to the laſt it hurrys *Many* and *Often*. So that it were far more to be wiſh'd, that we had no Reaſon at all, than to have it ſo much to our Detriment. As it wou'd be much better for a Patient to be entirely without Wine, than for the doubtful Hopes of Recovery to take, in it, his certain Perdition; ſince Wine in Diſtempers oftner hurts, than aſſiſts.

Thus I know not but, that it had been much better for Mankind to have been without that quick, ſpirituous motion of the Thoughts, Wit and Diſcernment, which we call *Reaſon* (it being pernicious to *Many*, advantageous to *Few*) than to have had it in ſo large a Proportion. If therefore you ſhou'd draw any concluſion, that the Supream Power takes any Care of Man, from this Benefit or Gift of *Reaſon*, it will only hold where *Right Reaſon* is given, which extreamly Few can boaſt to be their Lot. For the Many either by the Weakneſs of their Faculties, the Force of Paſſions, and the Tyranny of Cuſtom, and Education have not the leaſt Pretentions to it. But it ſeems not agreeable to that Divine Nature, we ſuppoſe the Maker of all Mankind, particularly to indulge only a ſmall and ſcanty Number of his Works, and leave the largeſt Proportion without any Regard. It is therefore much more probable, that all this is owing to our blind and Thoughtleſs Original *CHANCE*, than to an intelligent

gent Being, who muſt have been more juſt and impartial.

This Argument I know is obviated by ſaying, that the ill uſe, that is made of the Benefit, is no Proof of the Inſufficiency of the Favour or the Good Will of the Donor. The Father that leaves his Son a plentiful Fortune, which his Follies and Extravagance run out, is no leſs a provident Benefactor to his Son, than if he had made a good uſe of it. Who denies this? Or where, indeed, is there any Parallel in the Caſes? Many have done us ſervice by their Attempts againſt us; and a ſtab aim'd at our Lives, has ſometimes only launc'd an Impoſthume; on the contrary, many who have deſign'd us a ſervice, have even by their friendly Endeavours undone us. Thus the Gift is no Proof of the Intentions of the Giver; nor is the good Uſe, the Receiver has made of it any Argument, that it was beſtow'd with a benovelent deſign. For what Luſt, what Ambition, what Oppreſſion, what Deveſtation, or in ſhort what ſort of Wickedneſs ſoever do we undertake, without Conſideration, and Contrivance? That is without that Motion, and Agitation of the Mind, and Thought, which we call *Reaſoning?* For all *Opinion* is *Reaſon*, which if true, we call *Right Reaſon*, if falſe, *Ill Reaſon*.

But this Gift, which you derive from God, is meerly *Reaſon* abſtractly conſider'd from the good or bad Uſe that is made of it, which we directly derive from our ſelves. Nor is *Reaſon* given us by God, as a Legacy is by a Parent, for what more pernicious cou'd Heaven have beſtow'd if it had deſign'd us the greateſt miſchief? What wou'd become of all the Seeds, and Fewel of Injuſtice,

juſtice, Intemperance, Fear, and the like, if Reaſon did not aſſiſt our Vices? What ſhall I ſay of the ſubtle Contrivances of Sharpers, Proſtitutes; of the Revengeful, the Ambitious, the Debauchee, Impoſtors, *&c.?* Do any of them purſue or accompliſh their Vices without the Aſſiſtance of Reaſon? Whence come Flatery, Deceit, Treachery, Bribery, falſe Judgments, and falſe Reports? Whence private, whence publick Robery, whence the betraying of our Country? Breaking all the Bonds of Nature and Religion, with a calm unconcernedneſs, but from *Reaſon?* Do not all theſe retire under the Protection, and the ſpecious Defences of *Reaſon?* Can we therefore, imagine, that this Food, and Nouriſhment of Evils came from a God? And from ſuch a God, as you ſuppoſe? Who if he has given us *Reaſon*, has given us Malice too; for Malice is a cunning, deceitful *Reaſon* to contrive Miſchief. Whence it follows, that Fraud, with all its attendant Wickedneſs is the effect of *Reaſon!* Oh! that Heaven had never beſtow'd ſuch a Gift on Man, as this *Subtilty*, he boaſts ſo much of under the ſpecious Name of *Reaſon*, which very few make a right Uſe of, and thoſe that do, are oppreſs'd by thoſe, who do not. But innumerable are the latter. So that this Divine Gift of Reaſon and Conſideration ſeems beſtow'd on Mankind for Fraud, and Deceit, and not for Goodneſs.

But you often reply, that it is not the Fault of the Giver, but the Receiver, not in the Goodneſs of God, but in the Wickedneſs of Man. Providence ſhou'd then have given us a *Reaſon*, that excluded Crimes, and Tranſgreſſions. And where

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is there any Room for this Errour of Providence? Man leaves his Eſtate to his Heir, with hopes, that it is well beſtow'd, tho' he may be deceiv'd becauſe he is but a Man, Judging by Appearances, and guided by his blind Inclinations. But how can God be deceiv'd? And if, as you contend, Man perverts the Reaſon, which Providence has given him, with a benevolent Intention, into Malice, it is far better that he had never receiv'd the Benefit. As that Phyſician is inexcuſeable who ſuffers his Patient the Uſe of Wine, when he knows he will make an ill uſe of it, and ſo be the Cauſe of his Death; ſo is your Providence accuſable for giving *Reaſon* to thoſe, who, he knew, wou'd uſe it ſo perverſely, and with ſo great an Improbity.

If Man were made by a Good, Beneficient Being, that Omnipotent Being ought to have made all Good, or ought at leaſt to take peculiar care of thoſe, that are good. But the Day, nor the Year wou'd not afford time enough to enumerate all thoſe, whoſe Goodneſs and Honeſty have been no Defence againſt the Aſſaults, and Oppreſſions of the Wicked, and of the Wicked, that have liv'd and dy'd in all the Good Fortune they cou'd Deſire, and in the Fulneſs of their own Wiſhes.

The World therefore (purſu'd *Philalethes*) being thus evidently govern'd by *CHANCE*, may, as reaſonably be ſuppos'd to be form'd by the ſame. For how can we imagine ſuch a Being, as you deſcribe God, ſufficient to form all the Univerſe, and yet not able to govern and regulate Mankind? What do I ſay of their Government? Nay, What is there in their very Conſtitution, and Temperment to declare an all-wiſe

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Cauſe of their Being? How contradictory to the Notion of an Infinite Goodneſs, and Juſtice is it to give Men Appetites, that require one thing, and Laws that command what is directly oppoſite? To make the ſatisfying the Appetites, which he has given us of his own Accord, without our ſeeking, puniſhable, with eternal Death? If it was juſt to give us thoſe Paſſions, it can never certainly be unjuſt to ſatisfy 'em; elſe they were given us only to make us Unhappy, which is contrary to the Nature of ſuch a Being, as you ſuppoſe.

Again, who can ſee how the Affairs of this World are adminiſter'd, and yet believe them Conducted by the Providence, and Care of an All-Powerful, and All-Wiſe, and All-Good Being? Are not the moſt Worthleſs ſtill moſt ſucceſsful? Will a brave, or naked Honeſty recommend you to the Great? Or defend your juſt Cauſe againſt the Wicked Oppreſſor, if Money be wanting? Or indeed does not Wrong always prevail, where it is back'd by Intereſt, Power or Money? And are not Humane Events perfectly fortuitous, when the wiſeſt Counſel, and beſt concerted Meaſures ſhall be diſappointed by Treachery, and ſometimes by a meer Accident, that cou'd not be foreſeen?

True (interrupted *Philonexus*) and we find, that there is nothing ſure here but the Power of Money. Propoſe the moſt uſeful Deſign in the World to your Stateſmen, and the moſt beneficial to the Publick, and if it bring no Advantage to their own Pockets, or if it ſlater not the Party they are engag'd in; or if it require the leaſt Divorce from their Pleaſure, or Intereſt, or their Biggotry to their particular Follies and Amuſements,

muſements, the Projector feeds on fair words, and the Publick Good is ſcandalouſly ſlighted. But if you propoſe the moſt deſtructive thing to the Common-Wealth, with a conſiderable Advantage to the Stateſmen's own Pockets, they value not in the leaſt the Intereſt of their Prince or Country. Money then is that, which ſecures your Cauſe againſt your Adverſary, tho' it be never ſo frail, or diſhoneſt; that recommends you to the Fair, and to the Great, when ragged Honeſty is avoided, laugh'd at, and exploded by all.

To ſeek Foreign Examples (perſu'd *Philalethes*) wou'd be endleſs, this, that is preſent here of *Pleonexus* as it is nearer, ſo is the more lively. Have all his Exactions, and his Uſuries leſſen'd, or encreas'd his Store? Is he not richer? Has he not all things in his Power by having Money? Who then, that ſees Man, and the World thus Manag'd can believe a good Wiſe, Juſt, and Omnipotent God preſiding o're and directing all Mankind? Tell not me, that God only ſuffers this to be done; for he that ſuffers an Evil, which he can prevent, Commands it. Or that theſe things are permitted for the Tryal of the Juſt, for that wou'd be to make God the Author of Evil, that good might come of it; the Author of Evil to *Many*, that a *Few* only might reap the Benefit.

I have I hope (ſaid *Chriſtophil*, after a little Pauſe to ſee if they had any more to add) with Patience allow'd you a ſufficient Freedom, in the Delivery of your ſentiments, and given you leave to amaſs all the ſpecious Arguments, Infidelity cou'd ſupply from its poor, and barren Store, to make

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out your Opinion if poſſible. But tho' I think them ſo very weak that they need no Oppoſition, as falling of Courſe, when any Man conſiders but truly of Things, yet I ſhall fully confute all your Arguments, which amount to the Denial of a *God*, and his *Providence*; robbing him of his Power in the Creation, and his Wiſdom and Goodneſs in the Adminiſtration of the Univerſe. I hope you will, with like Attention give Ear to what I ſay, and then I ſhall not loſe my Labour. For Evidence muſt convince when ever it appears.

That is certain (ſaid *Philalethes*) elſe we muſt renounce our Manhood. But, Sir, ſuppoſe, that what we have urg'd, on a more ſerious Conſideration, ſhou'd prove leſs reaſonable, than it appears on a tranſient View; and that you ſhou'd evince a *Firſt Cauſe*, and that intelligent, how much nearer to our Point are we, when we yet are ignorant of what that *Firſt Cauſe* is? What his Parts are, what his Form, what his Nature? Of all which we know nothing. So that I can perceive no Advantage from the Knowledge you are going to eſtabliſh of the Exiſtence of a Deity, unleſs you cou'd alſo demonſtrate, that we can by Reaſon, find out his Nature. For elſe how do we know, but that what we ſuppoſe may pleaſe him, may moſt diſpleaſe him? We find even at this Day, ſeveral Nations ſacrifice Men, Women and Children to him; Others offer Beaſts, Herbs and Fruits: And laſtly, others only Prayer, and Praiſe. Nor do any one of theſe, I ſuppoſe, want Reaſons to defend their Practice. For few Nations are ſo barbarous, as to follow any Principle, without ſome Reaſon to juſtifie their Tenet. Now all theſe Controverſies can never be decided unleſs you can arrive at, can paint and delineate the Nature of God ſo evidently, that there can be no Doubt of the Reſemblance. For till that is fixt, there can be no Standard, by which we muſt condemn One, and prefer the other. And how is it poſſible for a *Finite* Crea-

ture to comprehend God, who you ſay is *Infinite*? It is a Contradiction, and cannot therefore be true. Can a Span compaſs the Globe? Or a Bowl contain the Sea? Both are eaſier far, and bear more proportion, than *Finite* and *Infinite*. If therefore we cannot comprehend God, how ſhall we know his Nature? How his Will? But if not his Will, what imports it us whether an Intelligent Being form'd the World, or Chance?

I hope (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) you have now done with all your Doubts and Objections, that I may proceed without Interruption. If not, pray let me hear the whole, that viewing all you have ſaid, I may with themore Eaſe and Satisfaction purſue the Aim of my diſcourſe.

They both aſſur'd him that they had nothing farther to add, unleſs any new matter ſhou'd ariſe from what he had to offer.

The ſum, and ſubſtance therefore (purſu'd *Chriſtophil*) of all you have ſaid, is to Endeavour to take away the ſtrongeſt of our Arguments for a Deity. *viz.* the Creation of the World, and Man. By ſuppoſing them the Work of *Chance*, or that they were from Eternity. And next by bringing plauſible Reflections (for I will not call them Arguments) on the Conduct and Adminiſtration of humane Affairs, to deſtroy the Notion of Providence. Well ſeeing that if you cou'd once overthrow that, the whole Opinion of a Deity wou'd fall of Courſe; ſince it is impoſſible to maintain a God perfect in all thoſe Attributes, neceſſary to conſtitute a Deity, without a Providence. And laſtly to cut off our Enquiry into that Matter, and through a Diffidence in the ſolidity of your other Arguments, you conclude with the Impertinence of our Search whether there be an Intelligent firſt Cauſe, or no; by intimating that ſince we cannot dive into the Nature and Will of this firſt Cauſe, to draw from thence the Rules of our Conduct, and Lives, it matters not what the firſt Cauſe is.

I ſhall firſt, therefore prove the Exiſtence of a Deity, or Intelligent *firſt Cauſe*; next I ſhall demonſtrate his Creation of the World, againſt your *Epicurean*, or *Stoick* Notions of the Univerſe; its *Atome* Original, or Eternity. Then I ſhall evince his Providence, ev'n in the very Inſtances, you give againſt it; and laſtly, I ſhall prove, that we have infallible Notions both of the *Nature* and *Will* of God, as far, as is neceſſary for our Happineſs here and hereafter.

But give me leave before I proceed in this Argument, becauſe you may think it long, to Entertain you (by way of Reſpit, from theſe ſerious Enquiries) with the Account of a wonderful effect of *Chance*, which happen'd in this very Place, where we are now arguing for, and againſt it: And which you may urge hereafter, in defence of your Opinion, If I can't before we part, convince you of your Error; if you are both willing for a few Moments to ſuſpend the Proſecution of this Argument.

They having both expreſs'd their Deſire to hear a Novelty, which promis'd them ſomething very Surprizing, he begun in this manner.

You have then (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) obſerv'd the inſide of my Houſe, ſeen the Paintings, and Carvings, the Contrivance, and Convenience of the Offices, and Appartments, the Structure of the Buildings, and every thing, that the beſt Architects cou'd invent to make it pleaſant and uſeful. You have ſeen the Order of the Outſide, and ſurvey'd the *Corinthian* and *Compoſit* Pillars, with their Cornices, the Feſtons, and Copings; have approv'd of the Skill of the Artiſts, and confeſs'd your Satisfaction in the Beauty of the whole. The Viſta's and Groups of Trees, which are juſtly rang'd in their ſeveral Places, with regard to Beauty and Order, to compleat the delightſomneſs of the Situation, you have often entertain'd your ſelves with, ſince you did me the Honour of your Company. Theſe fine Parterres, amuſing

Mazes, agreeable Fountains, with thoſe ſtrong, and Variable Caſcades and ſeemingly artificial Falls of that tumbling ſtream, which in its Serpentine Courſe and in that Channel of *Engliſh* Marble, wanders through the Allies, and ſpreads it ſelf in various Branches through this Wilderneſs, hiding it ſelf ſometimes on a ſuddain, and by and by, breaking thro' thoſe Reeds of Lead, with a pleaſing murmur in one collected ſtream falls down that little Precipice from the Urn of that River God, that lies ſupinely on his Bed of Reeds, ſurrounded with his ſedgy Arbour. Theſe you have fed your Eyes with, and own'd that the *Italian* Gardens did not exceed this, in contrivance of its Fountains, and Walks, *&c.* When you come to the Foot of that Precipice in the midſt of that Baſon, that receives the Stream at its Fall, you find a *Venus* on her Shelly Chariot, as juſt riſen from the Sea, not unlike the *Venus* of *Correggio*, attended with a Thouſand little *Cupids* the *Nereids*, and *Tritons*, from whoſe ſhelly Trumpets you hear ſounds Muſical, and Surprizing, while from others ſprout Streams every way acroſs, ſo as to form a Watery Canopy for the Goddeſs, juſt ſprung from that Element; while *Neptune* fixing his Eyes, with wonder and delight on the New-born Goddeſs, ſtrikes his *Trident* on the adjoining Rock, from the holes made in it by that Blow, ſprout out three Bodies of Water to an excellent Height, forming a cloudy Arch from thence to the Shoar, where falling into that ſmaller Baſon, they have an outlet into the ſeveral little Channels, that travel through the lower part of the Garden.

What need I run through every particular of theſe Gardens, which your own Eyes will beſt deſcribe to you from this Mount, which ſurveys not only that, but all the Country round us; and ſhows you all that Diverſity of Fields, Meadows, Arable, and Paſture, cut and water'd by thoſe gentle wandring Rivers, that give them Fertility and Beauty? All

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this pleaſing Variation of Hills, and Vallies, Woods and Plains, with the reſt of this entertaining Scene, which you hence ſurvey, had the ſame Original and Fate.

You imagine, I doubt not, that either my ſelf, or ſome other, from whom I might buy, or derive it, was at a conſiderable Expence in the Building this Houſe, and the finiſhing theſe Gardens. That we had conſulted the beſt Architects, Gardeners, and the like, to bring it to this agreeable Perfection. But what if I ſhould aſſure you, that all this Ground, and the adjacent Parts were ſome few years ſince all one vaſt Pool, muddy, and unwholeſom; that on the Banks of this *Dead Sea*, this diſmal Water, liv'd the Owner of that, and ſome contiguous Eſtate: A perſon, that lov'd none but himſelf, that, as he was an Enemy to all, ſo he ſpent his days ſordidly, ſecluded and retir'd from all Society; that he neither knew nor believ'd a God; as being as ignorant and fooliſh, as he was ill natur'd, and yet was in one lucky Night bleſs'd (if he had known the bleſſing) with the moſt miraculous *Chance*, that ever was known in the World.

The Waters withdrew their Malevolent and Diſagreeable Face, and the ſtenchy, and unwholeſom Mud form'd it ſelf into theſe beautiful Subſtances, which we now view with ſo much delight, and for which I ſuffer, I doubt not, in the Opinion of *Pleonexus* as a Prodigal. All theſe Charming Contrivances, that wou'd make you believe, ſo much Art, and Coſt was expended on them, by I know not what happy Hit, jump'd into this Order; theſe Parts into this Seat, others into thoſe Fields, Woods, and Medows, which added ſo vaſt a Revenue to the old wretched Miſer, that not able to ſupport the ſtrong Aſſaults of Joy on ſo unexpected, a good Fortune, periſh'd the moment of its Arrival. Tho' others ſay, that his Bent of Soul being to Confuſion he expir'd in meer Rage at the View of the Beautiful Order into which *Chance* or *Nature* had ſo very ſuddainly thrown his Confus'd Property.

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Tho' you may perhaps doubt the Truth of this Hiſtory, yet I can aſſure you, that there are not a few, who aſſert it, and are Men, who loudly declare that they are not in the leaſt guilty of Credulity or any ſuch irrational Weakneſs.

This indeed (ſaid *Philalethes*) is a ſtory worthy to be Chronicled, with *Don Bellianis* of *Greece*, *Bevis* of *Southampton*, Sir *John Mandevils* Travels, and the *Legends* of the *Romiſh* Saints, but will never gain Credit among Men of any tolerable Senſe, or Underſtanding. Nor can I believe it poſſible, that you ſhould your ſelf give any Credit to it, tho' you have been pleas'd to divert us with the Extravagant Relation.

It is a greater wonder to me (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) that you ſhou'd doubt its Truth, than that I ſhou'd believe its Extravagance, ſince ſo many have defended it in writing, and that with not a little Aſſurance, nor a few Arguments, which they at leaſt think very real, and might be of Force enough if you perus'd them, to convince you of the poſſibility of the Matter of Fact.

Not all the Writers, nor Reaſons in the World (return'd *Philalethes*) ſhall ever perſwade me, that all theſe beautiful Ornaments, of the Houſe and Gardens, ſhou'd be the work of Chance: That thoſe Images of *Neptune*, *Venus* and the reſt, which for their Excellence ſeem to Challenge *Italy* for their Country, ſhou'd owe their Original to ſo fantaſtical a Cauſe. Or is it poſſible for any Man, to be ſo very a Brute in Underſtanding, as to imagine, that *Chance* made thoſe Pictures of *Rubens*, *Van Dike*'s, and *Raphael*. How came Chance to be ſo good a Painter, as to copy ſo artfully the Hands of thoſe Maſters, that the moſt skilful beholders cannot diſcover the fallacy. Beſides all the Contrivance of the Garden, plainly demonſtrate it to be the Work of a very great Maſter in his Art. There is too much Order in it to be the Work of *Chance*; one part harmoniouſly anſwers

the other, and no part discovers any of the irregularities of a fortuitous Maker. Here is Design, and that's the Effect of reason, and therefore it cou'd not be owing to *Chance*.

But I believe you laugh at me for endeavouring to confute so wil'd a notion, yet you ought to excuse the Folly, since my great esteem of you, made me pay so much to your Asseveration, with an Air more serious, than the debate of so rideculous a Story deserv'd.

Laugh (interrupted *Pleonexus*,) who cou'd choose but laugh to here you, like *Don Quixot* encountring Wind-Mills, and forming Arguments against a Whim, that was only brought in, to make us laugh at the Credulity of Mankind, who are fond of believing the most monstrous and impossible of Things, that they may not be thought, to be wanting in Faith. I wonder it is not yet stept into a Fundamental of Religion.

That it is so here (continued *Philalethes*) I verily believe, and if there be so monstrous a Tradition in this Country, I won'd no more attempt to undeceive the common People, than I wou'd to Preach against *Transubstantiation* to the Inquisition at *Rome*.

I am more surpriz'd (said *Christopil*) at your Incredulity of your own Principles, than you can be at the suppos'd Absurdity, of the People of these Parts. Ah! *Philalethes*! How weak is the Ground, and Foundations of Errour! How strong and forcible the Power of Truth, and Reason! You do not consider, how you have destroy'd your own Argument for the Fortuitous Production of the Universe, while you disbelieve a much less Effect of *Chance*, as monstrous, and incredible. Is it so hard for *Chance*, to copy a Picture, to form a Statue, or produce a regular House, and Garden, and yet so easy for it to make the World, form the Body, and Mind of Man, produce the wonderful Variety of Plants and Animals; cast into this beauteous Order, all the Numerous, and various Parts

of the Creation, which are incomparably greater Arguments of a *rational Cauſe*, than the Pictures, Statues, Groves, Fountains, Wilderneſs, and the other Ornaments of my Gardens.

To put this beyond doubt, let us take a View of the Univerſe and behold, with Aſtoniſhment, the ſurprizing Wonders of *CHANCE*. The Equality of the Motion, and rolling of the Heav'ns, of the Courſes, or Revolutions of the Sun, Moon and Stars, their Diſtinction, Variety, Beauty, and Order, the very Sight of which muſt give us a ſtrange Idea of your firſt Cauſe, *Chance*; and make us proteſt, that the moſt Supreamly wiſe Being, that Man can ſuppoſe, cou'd not have contriv'd the whole with more Harmony, and Juſtneſs. Oh! Regular effects of *Chance!* If you cou'd not believe this Houſe built, and the Pictures drawn, and ſet there without an Architect and Painter, how can you pretend to Reaſon, and yet not allow it infinitely ſtronger, in theſe great Motions, theſe regular Revolutions and Viciſſitudes of ſo many, and ſo conſiderable Bodies, with that uninterrupted Identity (as I may ſay) of Order, without the leaſt Variation.

But to come to particulars, and view every Part of this wonderful Creation, or Work of *Chance*. I will begin with this *Vortex*, or *Whirling* of which our Sun is the Centre, according to the Syſtem of *Copernicus*, which is the more certainly true, becauſe more agreeable to the eternal Wiſdom, for *fruſtra fit per plura, quod poſſit fieri per pauciora, it is ſuperfluous to do that by Many, which may be done by Few*, is a Maxim of a wiſe Contriver. Reaſon or Wiſdom is moſt free in its works from Embarraſſments, and difficulities, being moſt *Eaſy*, and moſt *Simple*. Now the Syſtem of *Ptolemy* is too much incumber'd to anſwer the Wiſdom of Nature (tho' ev'n that will hold good in all, that our conſideration will bring under our View in this) which that of *Copernicus* exalts by anſwering all the *Phænomena* or Appearances with that Eaſe and

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Simplicity, that evidently prove the contrivance of the moſt intelligent, and rational Being.

By this *Solar Syſtem* (for ſo that of *Copernicus* is call'd, becauſe in it the Sun is the Principle of Motion, as well as of Light, and is Situate in the Centre of the whole) the Sun is plac'd in the middle, very near the Centre of Gravity, whence it may from the Convenience of its Situation diſpence Light, Heat, and Motion to all the Planets with an equal Influence in Proportion to the diſtance of each of them from him, and to the Neceſſity, and uſe of each in Regard of its Nature, and Occaſions.

All the Motion therefore of this *primum Mobile* is on its own *Axis*. And its Diameter is likewiſe proportion'd to the Extent of its Influence above 5185540000 Miles, each Mile conſiſting of 5000 *Paris* Feet, for the Sun is four Hundred and ninty four Thouſand, and one Hundred Miles Diameter, which reckoning the Circle but barely 3 Diameters, makes it 1482300 Miles about, whereas it is ſomething more, for the Circumference is to the Diameter, as 22 is to 7.

Next to him we find *Mercury*, which being diſtant from the Sun 20952000 Miles, and 2717 Diameter, that is above 8151 Miles in Curcuit, it revolves about the Sun in 82 Days. And yet tho' the Diſtance ſeems ſo great from the Sun, it is ſo near in Reſpect of us, that it is often loſt to our ſight in that vaſt Ocean of Light, ſo, that we can very rarely get a diſtinct View of him.

Next to *Mercury* we find the Morning and Ev'ning Star, which Aſtronomers call *Venus*, whoſe diſtance from the Sun being 39096000 Miles, and her Diameter 4941, and Circumference 14823 Miles, ſhe finiſhes her Courſe round the great Luminary, in the ſpace of 224 Days, and 18 Hours. This Planet waxes and wanes like the Moon, being ſometimes wholly enlighten'd, and darkned according to her different Poſitions in Reſpect of the Earth.

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The next to *Venus* is the terraqueous Globe of our Habitation, whose Diameter being 8202 Miles, and Circumference above 24606 Miles, it finishes its Course round the Sun in 365 days, and 6 hours; from which it is distant 54000000 Miles. On this, as it were, attends another Planet much less than it self, which we call the Moon, whose Diameter in 2223 Miles, and Circumference 6669, and it revolves about the Earth from *West* to *East* in 27 days, 7 hours, and 43 Minutes, and in the very same space of Time, by a strange Correspondence, and Harmony of the two Motions revolves the same way about its own *Axis*, whereby (one motion converting it as much to, as the other from the Earth) the same side is always expos'd to our View. And thus this Planet follows the Earth round the Sun, by an indissoluble Tye, in its annual Motion.

Next to the Earth, and Moon, we meet with the fiery Planet of *Mars* single, and alone, that is, without any visible Luminary, accompanying him round the common Centre the Sun, which Revolution he compleats in one year, and 315 days, his Diameter being 2816 Miles, and Circumference above 8448, and his Distance from the Sun 82242000 Miles.

Directing your Eye from *Mars*, the next that presents it self to it, tho' at a mighty Distance, is *Jupiter*, the largest of the Planets, for his Diameter is 52522 Miles, and his Circumference above 157566 Miles, and he takes up in his large Tour round the Sun 12 Years, and is distant from the Sun 280582000 Miles. This Planet, besides its bigness, is remarkable for his four *Satellites*, or little Moons, which constantly attend upon him.

Lastly, on the very Boundary of this *Vortex*, we discover *Saturn* with his five little Moons, which, with him, in his Motion round the Sun, describe the most remote Circle of this Planetary Whirling in 30 Years; his Diameter is 43925 Miles, and his Circumference

ference 131775, and his Diſtance from the Centre of Motion 51354000 Miles.

Now let us reſt in our vaſt Journey, and take a View of what we have Diſcourſed, and we ſhall ſee theſe Planets all carry'd round in the Celeſtial Matter, which is incredibly ſubtile and ſwift, and in regular, and conſtant Order. For all that vaſt Ocean (to compare great things with ſmall) and Maſs of Celeſtial Subſtance, which is betwixt the Sun and the fixt Stars turns round, and carries them with it one way from *Eaſt* to *Weſt*, in a ſhorter, or longer time, as they are nearer, and farther from the Sun, their Common Centre.

Again, the Planets Exchange Light one from another, by Reflection; but are incapable of producing it from themſelves. The Sun alone does that, drawing from himſelf this Charming and Comfortable Subſtance which he generouſly, darts around him, with wonderful Force and Violence, and which is received, and intercepted, as I may ſay, by every ſolid Planetary Body. So that there is reflected from one Planet to another long ſtreaks, or Streams of Light, which croſſing, and traverſing each other in the Air, are interwoven a Thouſand different ways, and ſo make a Mixture of the richeſt Subſtance in Nature. For this Reaſon the Sun is plac'd in the Centre, that being a Situation moſt proper, and Commodious for him, equally to diſpence, and diſtribute his Light, and Heat for the Living, and enlightening of all about him.

All theſe Motions, that I have deſcrib'd, are ſo regular, and certain, that a good Aſtronomer, will tell you all the Eccliſes, of the Sun, and Moon, for Thouſands of years to come, and that to a Minute, and how much of either ſhall be obſcur'd, and in what part of the World, it will be viſible. He will tell you all the Conjunctions, and Oppoſitions of the Planets, and that without Errour, or Miſtake, which muſt certainly proceed, from their conſtant

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and invariable Revolutions. Oh! Wonderous Oeconomy of *Chance*! What cou'd the higheſt Wiſdom (O *Philalethes*) do more? For ſhou'd this *Chance* have thrown the Sun the leaſt out of this Order, either nearer, or farther from the Earth, not only all the Order of Nature wou'd be deſtroy'd, but the Earth rendred unfit for Habitation; its Fruits either never ripening, or elſe parching, and withering up. If the Time of its Revolution, or Annual Motion, and its oblique Courſe through the *Zodack* were not juſt as it is, the Seaſons wou'd be confounded, the Fruits of the Earth deſtroy'd, and Mankind wou'd periſh entirely.

Shall I proceed any further in this Survey of the Univerſe? Shall I advance to the Sphere of the fixt Stars, and conſider thoſe numerous Wonders of your *CHANCE*, through which, the Mind may wander for Ages without coming to an end of its Journey, or being able to ſay, it has now paſs'd through all the Marvels of the *Univerſe*? The diſtance of *Saturn* from the Sun is nothing, if compar'd with the Immenſe ſpace betwixt us and the *fixt Stars*. Are they not ſo many *Suns*? The Centres of ſo many different *Vortices*? For it is impoſſible that at that prodigious Diſtance from our Source of Light, they ſhou'd receive, and return a borrow'd Light, ſo far as to reach our Eyes: We ſee them Bright, and we obſerve that they neither ſet nor riſe, but remain always in the ſame Place. From which Appearance we have reaſon to believe, that, like our *Sun*, they have only a Motion on their own Axis; and diſperſe their native Light, and give Motion to the ſeveral Planets, that may depend on, and have their Revolutions in the Sphere of his Activity. Nothing leſs than the *Sun*, nor any thing without the ſame Qualities, cou'd throw its Beams and to immeaſurable diſtance.

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Each therefore of theſe Numberleſs fixt Stars are, in all Probability, ſo many Suns, and the various Centres of ſo many different Worlds, or Planetary Circles.

But to go farther, I ſhou'd loſe my ſelf, and perfectly drown you in the Immenſeneſs of the Conſideration; for all the *fixt Stars*, which preſent themſelves to the natural Sight of our Eyes, are nothing in number to what we diſcover in one Conſtellation of twelve or fifteen viſible *fixt Stars* by the help of a *Teleſcope*. What ſhall I ſay of the *Galaxie*, or *Milky Way*, which is nothing but an Infinity of fixt Stars, which their prodigious Diſtance from us contracts into one Point of View, and makes them ſeem but one continu'd *Whiteneſs*, the vaſt Spaces betwixt each being ſwallow'd up in the infinitely diſproportion'd Diſtance of the whole from us.

But be they what th'y will, they are ſtill wonderful Evidences of the Magnificence, and Power of their *firſt Cauſe*, or your *Happy Chance*———Who gave them their juſt Diſtance? That they ſhou'd not be too nigh, nor too far off from their different Centres of Heat, Light, and Motion? Who fixt them in ſo regular an Order, that they have never vary'd from it ſince their firſt Exiſtence? Who multiply'd their Numbers, ſo as to fill the *vaſt Expanſe* with perpetual marks of infinite Power and Wiſdom? *Chance* Oh! Perfect Stupidity! Oh! Notion for Ideots, or Children! Oh! *Philalethes*! join with the *Pſalmiſt* and ſay, *the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firnament ſheweth his Handy-work*. For what cou'd produce Order, and Deſign, but an *intelligent Being*? What all theſe Wonders without End or Number, but infinite Power, and Wiſdom as infinite in Perfection? This Vaſtneſs of the Univerſe, and in that the Excellence, and Power of the Almighty Creator becomes Obvious to the meaneſt Capacity.

Oh! *Philalethes*! Which way ſoever we turn our ſelves, which way ſoever we look, we meet with nothing,

thing, but what gives us a Proof of the Being, Power, Goodneſs, and Wiſdom of God?

If we conſider the vaſt Variety of Animals, in this our Terraqueous Globe, it wou'd take up whole days, nay weeks, if not months, but to name even thoſe, that are viſible; yet are there, as many ſpecies, and kinds inviſible (in all probability) as thoſe, which are the natural Objects of our unaſſiſted ſight. We ſee, and can diſcourſe diſtinctly of all from the *Elephant* to the *Mite*, but here our ſight is bounded, and ſhuts from our Conſideration infinite Numbers of *Living Creatures* leſs than a *Mite*, to which in ſome Proportion it is as big as an *Elephant* is to a *Mite*. And yet that there are ſuch, how incredible ſoever it may ſeem, the Invention of *Microſcopes* has diſcover'd. For by thoſe we find Thouſands of little Annimals in ſome Liquors, which we cou'd never have imagin'd to have been there.

But then to conſider the Fineneſs of the Order, and Contexture of their Parts, it muſt confound and amaze us. For 'tis plain that they live, and muſt therefore, have Parts for the Reception of Nutriment, for Digeſtion and the like. Can we then pretend to Reaſon, and yet ſuppoſe all this wonderful Mechaniſm the work of blind *Chance*? Oh! Sottiſhneſs beyond Belief.

If we look on the Face of Man, tho' all Mankind have in general almoſt the ſame Form, yet the two great Nations of the World, the *Europeans*, and the *Africans* ſeem to be made in different Models. Nay every Nation, and Family almoſt have a peculiar Air of Countenance, and it is wonderful to obſerve how Nature has vary'd ſo many Millions of Times, ſo ſimple a thing as the Face of Man. But that this was not done without Deſign, or out of a meer Wantonneſs of Nature, is plain from the Neceſſity of this Variety for the ſubſiſtence of humane Society. For without this Diſtinction, all the tyes of Blood and Nations; of Gratitude, Virtue, and the like, wou'd be diſſolv'd, for Men cou'd not

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be known from one another; all Property wou'd ceaſe; all Laws prove of no Effect, the guilty being undiſtinguiſhable from the Innocent, Right, and Wrong confounded, and this fatal Confuſion muſt inevitably have put a ſuddain period to humane Kind. The care of theſe things, and this Proviſion againſt theſe diſmal Inconveniencies, are noble Conſiderations for *CHANCE*.

Beſides this ſtrange inexhauſtible Variety of Beings, and the wonderful Changes, and Differences in the outward Forms of the ſame Species, we ought to look into the Animals themſelves, and there we ſhall ſoon find, that *Chance* cou'd never produce an Order ſo juſt, and ſo uſeful, and proper to every Creature. For there is not any one Part of the vaſt Number, that compoſe every Creature, but what is either neceſſary for its Exiſtence, or convenient for its better Being. Nor is there any One part, of the leaſt or the greateſt Animal, without an Aim at one of theſe two: for as it has nothing hurtful or redundant, ſo is there no Part agreeable wanting; as cou'd eaſily be made out in all Plants, from the Cedar to the Muſhrom, and in all Animals, from the Humane, to an Ant or Spider; and in all Parts from the Heart to the Hair, that grows on the Lids of the Eyes. And it is ſtill more plainly diſcover'd, in the ſuitable Variation of every Part.

There is no one ſpecies of Bones and Muſcles, or Bowels, but it is ſo diverſify'd, as to be moſt uſeful to the Creature to which it belongs. All Skins are made for Safeguard, and Senſe; but the Skins of Beaſts are made for motion, too and are therefore Muſcular. The Skin of an *Urchin* is aſſiſted with a ſtrong Muſcle, which ſticks cloſe to it all along the Back, to enable him the better to advance his Pikes.

Not only the Fins of Fiſhes, but their Swim Bladders are extreamly vary'd, and diverſly fitted to the difference of their motions. In a *Jack* it's ſingle; in a *Tench* double, from the hindermoſt of which a ſlender

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der Pipe is produc'd forward towards the Throat, into which it is at laſt inſerted, and is there divariated after the manner of the ſpermatick Veſſels, the better to ſtint the Diſcharge of the Air. In a *Roach* 'tis furniſh'd with a double Brace on each ſide; but that of a *Gudgeon* has none. In a *Bream* the Braces are ſtrait, but in a *Bleach* they are produc'd in a ſpiral Line, from the Brace to the Cone of the Bladder. In a *Rochet* there are Muſcles inſtead of Braces, which ſhows, that the Braces have every where the Nature, and uſe of Tendons in contracting the *Swim*; and thereby tranſfuſing the Air out of one Bladder into another, or diſcharging it from both as there is occaſion. Oh! wonderful contrivance of *CHANCE!* Oh! amazing Proviſion of *Accident!*

The Chryſtal that is in the Eye of a Fiſh is a *Ball* in that of any Land Animal a *Bowl*. Being by that fitted for a clearer ſight of the Object, either in the Water, a thick Medium, a diſtance leſs, and by a greater Refraction, or in the Air, thinner Medium, and a greater Diſtance, and leſs Refraction.

Among a great many Varieties, both in the inner and outer Ear, thoſe which appear in the Paſſage into the *Back Bone* are remarkable. For in an *Owl*, which perches on a Tree, or Beam, and hearkens after the Prey beneath her, it is produc'd out farther above, than below, for the better Reception of the leaſt Sounds; but in a *Fox*, that ſcouts underneath the Prey at Rooſt, it is for the ſame Reaſon, extended out farther below. In a *Pole-Cat*, which hearkens ſtrait forward it is produc'd behind, for the receiving any forward ſound. Whereas in a *Hare*, that is extreamly quick in hearing, and thinks of nothing but being purſu'd, it is ſupply'd by a bony Tube, which is ſo directed backward as to receive the leaſt, and moſt diſtant ſounds, that come from behind her. And in a *Horſe*, that is quick of hearing, as well as the *Hare*; becauſe he receives the Voice of the Driver, and Whip from behind.

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The Variation of the Windpipe is remarkable in every Creature according as it is neceſſary for the variation of the Voice. In an *Urchen* or *Hedg-hog*, which has a very ſmall Voice, it is hardly more than Membranous, or made of a thin Skin; In a *Pidgeon* that has a low and ſoft Note, it is partly Griſtly and partly Membranous, that is where the Rings meet. In an *Owl*, that has a lowder Note, 'tis more Griſtly. But that of a *Jay* has Bones inſtead of Griſtles; and the ſame is in a *Linet*, from which both of them derive a Stronger, and a Lowder Note, than other Birds of the ſame bigneſs have, who have only griſtly Windpipes.

The Rings of the Windpipe, are fitted for the Modulation of the Voice: For in Dogs, and Cats, that have a great many Notes or Tones, as Men have in the Expreſſion of the ſeveral Paſſions, they are Open and Flexible, as in Men; by which all, or any of them are dilated, or contracted more or leſs, as is convenient for a Higher or Deeper Note. Whereas in ſome other Animals, as in the *Japan* Peacock, that hardly uſes more, than one ſingle Note, or Tone, they are entire, and ſo the Windpipe is always, and in every Part, as one, continued Bore.

But I ſhould want time, and you Patience to hear all, that might be ſaid in all the Particulars of this Nature. For at once but to think of the different Species of Animals, and then to Multiply the Variety of the ſame Parts adapted to the Uſe, and Benefit of each particular Creature, wou'd give you a View of the Immenſeneſs of the Conſideration.

To quit all the reſt, and to take a proſpect of the wonderful Mechaniſm of Man, and deſcribe all his Parts, the Numberleſs winding Branches of his Veins and Arteries, the ſeveral uſeful and neceſſa-

ry Positions of his Internal, as well as Outward Parts, all necessary and of use, it would take up as many Volumes, as have been Writ of Anatomy; whence you may draw invincible Arguments of the wise, and good Designer of the Humane Mechanism. There is no one part of Man, but, to make a strong and through disquisition on it, wou'd require a great deal of Time, and many and wonderful Speculations; Besides the Figure and Number of the Organical Parts of his Brain, how much superiour is it in Quantity, to that of any other Creature, considering the Proportion of his Bigness? Which makes it by so much the more Capacious a Treasury of the Ideas, or Images of Things.

These wondrous Variations, this admirable Disposition, this adapting each thing, and Part for its necessary Use, is it the Work of CHANCE? No, no, *Philalethes*, it is evident, that they proceed from a steady, immutable and unbounded Reason, which can never be disappointed in its Ends and Intentions.

The Nose is to admit, and distinguish the several kinds of Scents, to Defend the Eye, to Breath through, when the Mouth is clos'd, and to form some Letters. In Brutes it is, as much more nice and critical, than in Man, as the distance from the Nostrils to the Brain is the greater; by which they judge exactly of what ever they hunt after, eat, or refuse.

What a Stupendious Machine is the Eye, if we survey the Muscles, Membranes and Humours of which it is compos'd? How aptly it is either mov'd, or fix'd by the Muscles? How purely the Rays of Light are transmitted by the Perspicuity of the Humours? how regularly are the same Rays refracted by their Figure? how effectually is it pre-

prevented, by the black lining of the *Sclerotes*, their being confounded by Reflection? How many Objects is it fitted to take in at once, and ſucceſſively in an Inſtant, and at the ſame Time to make a Judgment of their Poſition, Figure and Colour. It watches againſt Dangers, guides our Steps, and lets in all viſible Objects, whoſe Beauty and Variety inſtruct and delight. Oh! *Philalethes*! coud'ſt thou be incredulous to the forming this Houſe and Gardens by CHANCE, and yet doubt that the Former of the Eye, ſo infinitely more curious and difficult, ſhould be the Work of an intelligent, and moſt *Wiſe Cauſe*.

The Uſe, and the Harmony of the Parts might be ſufficiently demonſtrated, if we had Time, or if it were Neceſſary to our Cauſe to do it more fully. But here let two Inſtances ſuffice, 1. We can't ſo much as talk without the concurrent uſe of twelve or thirteen ſeveral Parts, as the Noſe, the Lips, the Teeth, the Palate, the Jaws, the Tongue, the Weaſon, the Lungs, the Muſcles of the Cheſt, Diaphragma, and the Muſcles of the Belly. 2. No leſs, than forty, or fifty Muſcles, beſides all other Subſervient Parts, go to execute that one Act of Laughter.

If God thus appear in the forming of Animals and the Bodies of Men; how much more will he be ſeen in the Formation of the Mind? on which he has ſet the Image of himſelf, But that you will ſee when (after I have clear'd this Point) I come to conſider the Soul in its Nature, and Immortality.

I ſhall only add here my deſire, that you would define your CHANCE; inform us what you mean by that *Word*, that we may not diſpute about *Terms*, but Things. Do you ſuppoſe CHANCE therefore to be ſome Being or Exiſtence endu'd with Power

and Knowledge? or do you take it only for *Accident*? if the former, it will be neceſſary to give it the Attributes of the Deity, and ſo it will only be another name for the ſame thing: If the latter it is an Effect, and cannot therefore be the *firſt Cauſe* of all things, for it neceſſarily ſuppoſes ſomething before it, and from which it proceeds, as the Horſes Foam in the *Grecian* Picture, was the accidental Effect of the Painters throwing his Pallet with Colours at it. Thus you can give no Inſtance of any thing, that is done by Accident, but you muſt ſuppoſe ſome pre-exiſtant Agents, or Doers. But you ſeem to give a Power to CHANCE, as a Being, elſe all your Arguments about Chance amount to no more than this, That the World made it ſelf, which is to ſay, that it was before it was. But to inſiſt too hardly on every Abſurdity of your witty Opinion, would be to puzle your boaſted Reaſon too much; you keck at the leaſt Difficulty in Religion, and yet ſwallow the greateſt without perceiving it, in thoſe Tenets you Eſpouſe. I challenge you to give me one inſtance of any Regular Effect of Chance in Order, Form and Motion in the whole Univerſe, that is certainly, and indubitably ſo, tho in the leaſt Degree, in your own Time or in the Memory of Man, or undoubted Hiſtories of Matter of Fact. And if you cannot give an Inſtance of this in the leaſt degree, what Madneſs is it to aſſert the greateſt Perfection of it, that the Mind of Man can conceive.

'Tis true (reply'd *Pleonexus*) you have here given Inſtances enough of the Wonders of Nature, and that this World was the Work of ſome *intelligent Cauſe*, if it had any Beginning. which you have not prov'd, nor anſwer'd how a Spirit can work upon Matter.

Tho' I think, I have ſufficiently made out (return'd *Chriſtophil*,) that all this Order of things could not have been at all, without being produc'd by an infinitely Wiſe, and Powerful Maker, and in that prov'd, that he did make them, and therefore, that it imports neither us nor the force of the Argument to ſhow the Way and Manner of his Making them. Yet thus much I may venture to anſwer (not being very Sollicitous whether Satisfactory, or not, becauſe not material to the Queſtion) that it is plain from all our Actions, that Spirit has naturally a Power on Matter; for the *Mind* (as every one finds in himſelf) ſets what part, or Member of the Body it pleaſes in Motion; the Soul, being a pure Spirit, is the *primum mobile*, and *Movens* too, of our little World. So that if the humane Spirit, or Mind has (as we experimentally find it has) a Power on our material Body, how can we ſuppoſe, that God, infinite in his Attributes above us, ſhou'd want Power to do the ſame? for as all our Qualities are in infinite Perfection in God, ſo muſt of conſequence that of his *Spiritualities* moving and ordering matter into what Form and Figure, his Wiſdom thinks fit. And what cannot ſuch an infinite Power do, when exerted by the Will of Infinity it ſelf. And tho the finite Spirit of Man, can only work on matter fitted by its Organization for the Motion it is to receive from the Impulſe of the Mind, yet I hope you will not deny but, that it muſt be as eaſy for God, to put meer unmodel'd Matter into Motion. Nay its having Motion, is a ſufficient proof of its having receiv'd it from God? For from whence elſe had your ſuppoſititious Atoms their Motion? Matter is in it ſelf a ſluggiſh, heavy, dead Thing. But to come cloſe to the Point, did your Atoms derive their imaginary Motion from themſelves?

And was it essentially within every one of them? or had they it from without? that is from some extrinsic Motor? if they had this Motion essentially in themselves, what alter'd their Nature, and fixt them (since what had no beginning of Motion can have no End,) and so destroy'd what had been Eternally Essential to their Existence? If they had it from without, whence and from whom? but from God? For these queries will bring you to a necessity of deriving their Motion as well as all things else from that Eternal, and Omnipotent *Source* Almighty *God, in whom we all Live, Move, and have our Being.*

As to the Eternity of the World, and Man (for one will be of no use to you without both) you were extreamly unlucky in your Instances, for all you produc'd were of their Alteration, and Mortality. You assert indeed, that the World is Eternal, but without any one Reason for it. The Reasoning part you cunningly shift off to me, with the Proof of a Negative, imagining it a Difficulty too puzling to get over. Yet I doubt not but I shall clear this Point ev'n to your Reason, which is so monstrously prepossess'd with false Idea's, and erroneous Principles.

You make indeed a weak Effort at a showish Argument, couch'd still for its Advantage in short Interrogations to amuse the Passions, and beg our Credulity the more.

Ah! *Philalethes!* I am really asham'd to repeat such Arguments; and should *We* argue after this manner in Defence of *God* and *Religion*, what Triumphs would your Party make? what a Noise should we have with Reason? when indeed there are none who so much debase, and deny Reason, as the *Atheist*, whether Practical, or Speculative. And do you really think there is the least Force in what

what you have ſaid? Have we no way of knowing, that a thing had a beginning without ocular Demonſtration of the Act of its Formation? If I ſee a Watch am I not as certain from both the Matter and Form, that it was made, as if I had ſeen the melting down the Oar, the mixing the Metal, and the Filing, Cutting, and ſetting together of the Wheels, *&c.* If I ſee a waxen Figure of a Man or Woman, tho made Years before I was born, do not I as certainly know, that, that was made by Hands, as if I ſaw it moulding? as they both diſcover an intelligent Maker, ſo do they by conſequence diſcover a time of their Beginning: And we might, as reaſonably believe them the Work of *Chance*, as that they were ſo from all *Eternity*, their Order, and Form forbid the Firſt, and their periſhable Nature of their Materials the other.

But to ask you ſome Queſtions too, and thoſe, I hope, more rational than yours; do you mean by the World this Globe of Earth and Water? do you conſider it meerly in it ſelf, without Regard to Man, Beaſt, Fowl, Inſects, Fruits and Herbage; in ſhort without either the Animal or Vegetative Kingdoms, or collectively with them? If without them, what imports it whether it be Eternal or not? a bald, uſeleſs Lump of no Benefit, or Advantage? a Waſt of Nature, and therefore unworthy of Nature? but ev'n thus it would not hold, as I ſhall perfectly make appear, or as indeed it does already appear, from thoſe Inſtances I have given of the Periſhableneſs of the Matter. But if you conſider them collectively our Eyes are infallible Witneſſes (And Evidences which you cannot disbelieve) that they all Decay, and periſh daily, and if the Parts Periſh, the Whole may, and in Time muſt, and what has an End muſt have had a Beginning.

But allowing you to take the Globe distinctly from its Inhabitants and Products, you have own'd that that the Earth, and Sea in Process of Time have chang'd places. Nay you have brought it for an Argument of the Worlds *Eternity* tho' it prove directly the Contrary to what it was introdnc'd for: for it argues a very considerable, nay total Change of the Face of Natuture, and of the Globe; but that which is subject to Alteration, is subject to Dissolution, or may perish, and w at can perish must have had a Beginning.

Again this Globe is Body or Matter, but all Body or Matter is dvisible, that is can be divided into several Parts, and is liable to the violence of outward Agents; now whatever is divisible, can never be Immortal or Eternal, since its Division, and Separation of one Part from another must make it subject to the Loss of that *Individuation* or Numerical and Essential Form, which gives it its present Denomination. The Earth therefore being thus subject to a Separation of Parts, is capable of falling into a Chaos of confus'd Matter without Form; which Matter it self had also a Beginning as I shall make out hereafter. Again if, according to your first System, the World be compos'd of Atoms, it cannot be Eternal, since whatever is compos'd had a Beginning.

This Argument which you brought from the Mutability of the Earth, was design'd to prove the possible Loss of Records, which never were, and so to avoid one Thrust like an unartful Fencer, you have expos'd your self to another. Nay and which is yet worse, you still lie open to the same, for the Argument, that all Records of time referring to a Beginning, is a Proof that the World, and Man are not Eternal, is in full Force, till you bring better Convictions of it, than all your *Per-*

adventures,

adventures, *May be's*, *Suppoſes*, &c. borrow'd from the *Oracles of Reaſon* and from a Letter there, the Beginning of which ſufficiently confutes the End, by proving what the Sequel ſeems to endeavour to render at leaſt doubtful.

I ſhall therefore firſt give you a concluding Proof of the Neceſſary Exiſtence of a God; and then demonſtrate that neither the Earth, Matter, nor Man cou'd be Eternal. I urge the more Proofs of a God, becauſe on our ſure Fixing that Principle, we build all our after Deſigns beyond Controverſie.

To proceed therefore with the greateſt Clearneſs, and to avoid a War of Words, and that Shelf on which many Authors have ſuffer'd Shipwreck, who write whole Books on what they have not once defin'd, I once for all inform you, that by the Word *God*, I underſtand, and mean *that Being* (whatever his Nature is) *which gave Exiſtence to all, but receiv'd his from none.* I ſhall anon explain his Nature, as far, as the Imbecility of Humane Underſtanding, and Language will allow.

I ſhall now ſhow, that there is ſuch a Being, as I have mentioned; and that he naturally, and neceſſarily exiſts. But I lay this down, as a fundamental (notwithſtanding your Cavils which I hope are remov'd) that Humane kind, according to the Hiſtory of all Nations, had a Beginning, which I think there is no neceſſity of proving here.

Pardon me (interrupted *Pleonexus*) I think it abſolutely neceſſary; for I can ſee no Reaſon why any thing in a Diſpute ſhou'd be granted unleſs prov'd.

I avoided that (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) not out of any

any, nay the leaſt difficulty in the matter; but meerly as a thing ſelf evident. However I ſhall Comply with your Deſire, and in Order to it ask you this Queſtion— You find that you your Self have a *Being*? I hope you'll grant me that, or ceaſe to be. Nay your very Denial wou'd be a Proof of it, for if you were not, you cou'd neither deny, nor grant any thing. I hope therefore, that you will alſo confeſs, that there was a Time not many Years ſince, when you were not, that is when you, this numerical *Pleonexus* or *Philalethes* had no Exiſtence: I hope, you will not make your ſelf Eternal as *Philalethes* has the World? but that you will modeſtly own what Eye-witneſſes might prove, *viz.*, That you were Born about Fifty, or Sixty years ago, and that twelve Months before that, there was no ſuch thing, as *Pleonexus in Rerum Natura*. Your ſilence yields me this Point too. If therefore there was a time when you did not Exiſt, or when you had no Being, from whence came you? Who Produc'd you? Who made you? Who gave you that Being which you now enjoy? You will perhaps reply, that you deriv'd your Being from your Father and Mother, as they did theirs from their Parents; and ſo you muſt go on till you come to one firſt of the Race, who having had an End muſt alſo have had a Beginning, and that given him by ſome other Being that had no Beginning, for nothing can be before it was, or emerge out of nothing into ſomething by its own Force; for it was not and could not therefore have any Force or Energy, but muſt by a neceſſary Conſequence owe its being to a Cauſe, which cou'd have no Beginning, ſince without ſuch a Cauſe nothing, that is, could ever have been at all. But we ſee that all things are, there muſt therefore be an Eternal Cauſe to produce

duce them, and this neceſſarily exiſting Being or Cauſe I call GOD.

There were ſome of the old Philoſophers 'tis true, who when they were forc'd to confeſs, that Mankind had a beginning pretended to aſſert, that men like Plants Sprung from the Earth, as is apparent from *Lucretius*, who dwells much on this Particular, and defends it with as great Obſtinacy, as Prolixity; and from whom, as you have confeſs'd, you deriv'd it. But had this ever been done in any Place, it wou'd ſtill be done in ſome Place; for 'tis not poſſible for you to give any tolerable Reaſon why it could be, nay was done formerly, and cannot be done now. Beſides ſuppoſing this Opinion true, that Man did Spring like a Plant from the Earth, it wou'd at leaſt follow, that he ſprung from ſome Seed, as all Plants do; which being allow'd, as it neceſſarily muſt, the Demand returns again in Force, who form'd and made that Seed? who ſow'd it in the Earth? For you have already found how ridiculous it is to aſſert, that all this ſhou'd be done by *Chance*. But if you confeſs this to have been the Task of ſome Intelligent Nature, that gave it a Beginning; that very Confeſſion leads us to the Exiſtence of a GOD.

It cannot be, therefore, denied, that *Some Being* may exiſt more excellent in its Nature, than Man; that is, who has, and poſſeſſes Qualities more in Number, and Perfection, than thoſe of which Man is Maſter. Who is able, for example to do more, and has a more extended Knowledge, than Man. And that there is not only a meer Poſſibility of the Exiſtence of ſuch a Being, but that there is an abſolute Neceſſity, that he ſhould exiſt, nay that he cannot but exiſt. For ſince the firſt Man could not make himſelf before he was, there is a Neceſſity of another

ther Cauſe of his Exiſtence, and that more excellent than himſelf; for a being of equal or leſs Excellency cou'd not produce a Being of greater, *for none can impart or give what he has not himſelf.* The firſt Man was of equal Power, and Excellence with us, nor cou'd he do more than we in this Particular, nor lift himſelf from nothing into ſomething.

This more Excellent Nature we call GOD; whom if we ſuppoſe the Maker of Man, we may as reaſonably allow him the Creator of all other Animals, whether Conſiſting of more or of fewer Parts than Man; and much more, that he diſpos'd in Order all other Bodies that Surround us, for we plainly ſee, that they do not owe their Diſpoſition to Man. For ſince Human Kind had a Beginning, there is no Reaſon in Nature for us to ſuppoſe, any thing elſe of this Viſible World Eternal? but I ſhall defer the conſideration of the other Parts of the World, that I may here only ſpeak of Man, and his Creator.

From what I have ſaid 'tis evident, that there is ſome more Excellent Nature, than that of Man, to which Man owes his Being. But ſay you what is it? I anſwer, that we ſee in Man a Body, which we can handle, with our Fingers; that is bounded by certain Limits, That, in ſhort it wants ſeveral Properties, which if it had, it wou'd be much more excellent, than now it is.

Beſides the Body, we find there goes to our Compſition, ſomething elſe, that we cannot ſee with our Eyes; which *Underſtands, Wills,* is *Senſible, Free, Imagines, Remembers,* and in ſhort can do many Things, which that viſible Body of ours cannot do. This laſt we call the *Mind,* which ſo far excels the viſible Body, that it is capable of apprehending ſomethings infinitely bigger, than our Bodies. It ſees, and contemplates that vaſt Extenſion, which

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every way ſurrounds us: of which Extenſion, the *Mind* cannot by the Aſſiſtance of this viſible Body form an Idea, which is not by infinite degrees leſs than the Object, which it conſiders, for it cannot exceed the magnitude of the Body.

Hence 'tis apparent, that the *inviſible Mind* is more excellent, than the *viſible Body*, but yet it is not of that degree of Perfection, and Excellence, as to be able either to produce, or to create a *Body*, or ev'n to alter it according to its Will, and Pleaſure. It can give motion only to ſome parts of the Body, but were its Will bent, with never ſo great an Impetuoſity, it cou'd not move the Reſt, nor yet encreaſe or diminiſh either Them, or the Whole. But he, that procreated both the Mind, and the Body muſt of neceſſity be more excellent than both, and far more perfect, than the *Mind*, as I have plainly Obſerv'd becauſe he cou'd, and did give exiſtence to the *Mind*, and form'd the *Body* in that Manner, and Figure, in which we now behold it.

From all this it follows, that he, that made us is far above us in Excellence, and Perfection. We, therefore, Obſerve, that there are three things, that are above us, or plac'd beyond the Bounds, and Extent of our Properties. 1. There are ſome things, which our Knowledge cannot arrive at. 2. There are other things which our Power is not able to perform. 3 There are things which partake of both theſe Particulars, which being *unknown* to us, and too difficult for us to Effect hinder us from ariving at that Happineſs we Deſire and Wiſh for.

I have already prov'd that our *Mind* is more Excellent, than our viſible Body; and I believe that no man will doubt, but that there may be Natures, that *know*, *have* and cou'd *do* thoſe Things, which

which our Mind is not capable of, and those really more Excellent, and Extensive. Thus we pass on to that *Divine Nature*, which comprehends all the Properties of all Kinds, and Species of Beings; who knows all things, and can do every thing, and consequently enjoys a perfect and compleat Happiness.

But that this Supream, and infinitely most perfect Being, as it had no Beginning, so that it yet yet exists I shall thus demonstrate. The *Cause*, that produc'd Mankind either yet exists, or is perish'd; if it is perish'd it was not without Beginning for that, which had no Beginning, can have no End, for what Cause can be assign'd for the ceasing of that Being, which had no Cause to produce it, but was eternally *self-existent*? certainly he cou'd not destroy himself, nor cou'd any created cause have enough Power to destroy him. This wou'd put us still on a farther Enquiry, into the Cause, that gave him Existence, and an End; which will bring us through the more perfect Beings 'till we arrive at one Being repleniſh'd with the properties of all Beings, and is the Cause of *All*, which never had Beginning, nor ever can have End.

In short whatever had a Beginning deriv'd its Being from some other *Cause*, for Nothing can *be* of it self, and its own Power, which before it *is*, is nothing. But that Being, which produc'd All things had no Beginning, and can therefore have no End. Whence it appears, that the *Being*, who gave all others, that have been, are, or shall be, Existence, necessarily *Exists* himself; there is therefore an eternal Nature, which we call GOD, what ever his Properties are which I shall Consider after I have prov'd his Creation of the *World*, and *Matter*.

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The moſt conſiderable, or the chief Action of the Deity, was the Creation of the Univerſe; in which we muſt conſider the *Matter*, and the *Form*: but the princi, al Queſtion indeed is about the *Matter* for if I prove that God Created the *Matter*, of which the World is compos'd, there will be no difficulty of granting him the putting it into the *Form* we behold.

There are two kind of Beings, which we know, and thoſe are *Spirits*, and *Bodies*; and that both are Created by God out of Nothing this general Argument will ſhow. Theſe two Kinds of Being proceed from themſelves, or from ſome other Cauſe, or (in other Words) they had a Beginning, or they had none; if all Beings but *One* had a Beginning the Buſineſs is done, what I aim'd at is obtain'd, for I have prov'd that *One, Eternal Being*, which we ſeek. But if on the contrary you inſiſt That all things were Eternal, we muſt, again, Examine into their Nature, and ſee whether in that there be any thing, that reliſhes of Eternity.

To begin with *Spirits*. Of *Spirits* There is none, of which we have ſo perfect, and adequate a knowledge, as of our *Mind*; ſo that we are by Conſequence better enabled to enquire into its Exiſtence, and to determine, whether it be Temporal or Eternal. But firſt we cannot recal any Memory of our Exiſtence before a few paſt years, ſo far are we from remembring our Eternity; Whence it follows, that if our mind were Eternal, our Memory failing, and with that our Reaſon to make it ſo, we muſt ſeek ſome other means of Eſtabliſhing it. But on our Search we find no divine Revelation, which aſſures us of that Eternity of Exiſtance, which we have forgot: nor do we in our Mind diſcover any Tracks, or Footſteps of that our Exiſtence, without Beginning,

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on which we might build any reaſonable Conjecture, or Suſpicion, that we have been Eternally. Our thoughts are confin'd to ſo narrow a Compaſs, that all we know is only ſome few Properties of things, which we have firſt deriv'd from our Senſes, and found them by long Experience to be true. From which by the ſelf Conſciouſneſs of the Mind, or our Mental Knowledge, and Faculties, we have been able by Abſtraction to form ſome general Axiom. Our Power is but ſmall, and the Faculties of the Human Mind very ſlender, and bounded; extending to very few Things. Are theſe then Marks of Eternity? That *Being* certainly, which wanted no other Cauſe to give it a Beginning, can never ſtand in Need of another to attain all the Properties, which are by no Means of greater Excellence, than *Eternity*. Beſides our Minds are ſubject to innumerable Inconveniencies whether they will, or not, as numberleſs Griefs and Diſquiets, which they can neither prevent, nor often remove. Is it therefore Credible to the Exceſs of Credulity it ſelf, that a Nature of that Nobility, and Excellence, that had no Beginning, but is Self-exiſtent can be tormented, and vext by other Beings, that challenge not ſo extenſive a Duration, and by Conſequence are inferior to them, or ev'n by thoſe, which are at moſt but Coæval with them?

If we now turn our Conſideration to Bodies, we ſhall find nothing in the Corporeal Nature, that can perſuade us to allow them Eternal. There are three principal Properties of *Body*, which are *Extenſion*, *Diviſibility*, and *Impenetrability*. The Meaning of theſe Words are obvious enough to any Capacity; for every one, that ſees a Body finds it *extended*, that is, that it has Heighth, Breadth and Thickneſs: That it is *diviſible*, that is that

that it consists of Parts, which may be separated from one another; and that it is *Impenetrable*, or in another Word *Solid*, *i. e.* that no other Body at the same time can be in the very same numerical space. But do any of these Properties offer any Idea of Eternity? would it not be a pleasant way of Arguing to say thus—— *Bodies are Extended, Divisible, and Solid, therefore Eternal?* Nay should we compare the Defects, which we find in Matter, with that Supream Perfection of *Eternity*, it will be impossible for us to perswade our selves, that those Defects can be consistent with Eternity. For Example, *Matter* is in it self, or its own Nature Sluggish, Dead, without Motion, and would for ever continue in that State of Inactivity, if it were not for some outward, and foreign Impulse, that Rouses and puts it into an Action not its own. Who then can suppose (believe it none can) that a Nature, that possesses the highest and most compleat Perfection can be incumber'd with, and struggle under so vast a Defect?

The only Argument of any Force, which they bring, who assert the Eternity of *Matter*, comes to this Point, that they cannot conceive any Beginning of that vast, and infinite Extension, which every way surrounds us. They assure us, that notwithstanding all their Endeavours, they cannot comprehend, but that this Infinite Space must have been without any Beginning. I will not answer, that most of the Ancient Philosophers, as well as Modern have contended that meer Extension is not Body; I will only desire them to consider with some serious Application, what it is they understand, when they tell us that as they cannot conceive any Beginning of *Matter*, so there was none.

When we hear this Sentence pronounced *That Matter had a Beginning of Exiſtence*, We do not only Underſtand perfectly the Subject, and Attributes of the Propoſition, but diſtinctly perceive their Connection. The only thing, that deceives, and leads them aſtray, who deny, that they can underſtand any Beginning of *Matter*, is becauſe they endeavour to form a poſitive Idea of that *Nothing*, which, as I may ſay, was antecedent to that *Matter*, which is very fallacious, becauſe we can only have a Negative Conception of *Nothing*. When therefore we think of the Beginning of *Matter*, we cannot deny, that we have no Poſitive Idea of that State, that preceded the Exiſtence of *Matter*, becauſe there ought to be None; neither can there be any but what is deceitful.

From what has been ſaid we may draw theſe Concluſions. 1. That ſince we can diſcover nothing either in *Matter*, or *Spirit*, which diſcloſes their *Eternity*, that we cannot at leaſt ſay, that they are Eternal. 2. But ſince both *Matter*, and *Spirits* labour under the greateſt defects, we can with no manner of Reaſon in the World, allow them the moſt excellent, and moſt perfect Property, that can be conceiv'd, which is *Eternity*. 3. And therefore, that they are Created by ſome other Nature, who has beſtow'd on them thoſe Qualities, which he thought fitting, and who has denied them thoſe Properties, his Wiſdom thought fit not to allow them. That *Being* which in and by it ſelf has that, which is the *Greater*, muſt by a ſtronger Right, have what is not ſo conſiderable; That *Being* therefore, that was from all *Eternity* cannot but have all things elſe in and by its ſelf.

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From hence it is ſufficiently clear, that there are an innumerable company of Beings produc'd out of *Nothing*, and that there muſt therefore neceſſarily be a *Cauſe*, that produc'd them, ſince nothing can never of its ſelf exert it ſelf into Being. And ſince this has been made evident both, as to the ſubſtance of *Spirits*, and of the very *Matter* of the World, much leſs can it be denied of the *Form*, ſince both the concurrent Teſtimony of the Hiſtories of all Times, and the things themſelves confirm it.

I can therefore ſay no more here on this Point, but what I have ſaid already, and which doubtleſs you yet retain in your Memory. Having thus clear'd the Eternal Exiſtence of *God*, and the temporal Riſe of this World, and Man, I I think beyond the Poſſibility of a ſolid Reply, I ſhall proceed to the laſt part of your Query, which was, That ſuppoſing I had gain'd my Point, and eſtabliſh'd a firſt Cauſe, of what import would it be to us, unleſs we were better acquainted with his divine, and infinite Nature, than conſiſted with a Being ſo *finite*, as Man, which could never comprehend an *Infinite*. This if I miſtake not was the ſum of your Difficulty, and that if we could not comprehend his Nature, we could not his *Will*, and if not his *Will*, we might, as well diſpleaſe, as pleaſe him with our Endeavours.

That indeed (replied *Philalethes*) is the Purport of my laſt difficulty; but I preſume you have not yet renov'd a Difficulty plac'd before this, which yet muſt reach the Exiſtence, you have ſo admirably prov'd. I mean thoſe Flaws in his Providence, which *Pleonexus*, and I propos'd. Not but I begin to imagine, that God, who has ſhown ſo much Power and Wiſdom in the Formation of the Univerſe, cannot be without a Provi-

dence so necessary to the Preservation, and well Government of the Creatures he has made.

I confess (pursu'd *Pleonexus*) *Christophil* has given better Proofs, than I Expected, yet I cannot acquiesce in them unless, this other Point be clear'd, and that I believe he will find a more difficult Task; *ridiculum agere curam Rerum humanarum Quicquid est summum sed credi usui est Vitæ.* *'Tis a ridiculous Imagination* (says one of the Ancients) *to think, that the Supream Being, has Regard to Humane Affairs, but it is of use in Life to have the Belief of it propagated.*

I have not forgot (reply'd *Christophil*) this difficulty, which you rais'd, or your Reasons for it; nor did it appear to me so insurmountable, as to make me endeavour to evade the Answer. For believe me (*Philalethes*) Providence is as evident, as the Being of God himself; and he is as justifiable in all the Waies of Men, as he is wonderful, wise, and good in all his other Works. But the Reason, that I put your last Difficulty before it is that from our Enquiry into the Nature of God, as far, as Mortal Understanding can arrive; that is, as far as is necessary for us to know, for the Conduct of our Lives, and our present, and future Happiness, prepares the way to the removing all your Empty Clamours against *Providence*.

Christophil had no sooner said these Words but a servant brought word that supper waited for them. So that adjourning their Discourse till that was over, they left the Arbour and retired into the House to refresh themselves with a generous tho Temperate Repast.

THE

THE
Second Diſcourſe.
OF THE
Attributes of GOD.

SUpper being over, and the Servants retir'd, indifferent Matters having for a while entertain'd them, *Philalethes* with ſome Earneſtneſs deſir'd *Chriſtophil* to purſue the Diſcourſe, which was broke off by the Supper. *Pleonexus*, who was not ſo willing to be convinc'd of his Errors, as the other, would by no means conſent, aſſuring them, that it would be better to defer it to another Day, when their Minds refreſh'd by a gentle Repoſe, would be more ſprightly, and penetrating, and by Conſequence more able to judge of the Weight, and Force of an Argument, and ſo to diſcover the Truth, and then to acquieſce in it; or to diſtinguiſh the Error, and avoid it. That for his part tho' he argu'd meerly for arguing ſake, as being already a good *Chriſtian*, and by conſequence ſufficiently convinc'd both of the Exiſtence of a God, and his Providence; yet ſince he was enter'd he would willingly lay all the Force he could on the wrong

ſide, the better to furniſh himſelf, with Reaſons, from ſo able an head, as *Chriſtophil*'s for the Right. But that at preſent his Mind was ſo fatigu'd with the former Attention, and ſo unfit 'till the through Digeſtion of his Supper for Reflections of that Nature, that he muſt deſire the Diſcourſe be put off till the next Day.

Philalethes, on the other ſide, was too much touch'd with what he had heard, to reſt ſatisfy'd with what had been ſaid, without proceeding farther, and aſſur'd *Chriſtophil*, that the only way to render him unfit to give juſt Attention to his Diſcourſe, would be to defer it till to morrow, for his Mind was ſo taken up, with what had been ſaid, that he could hope for no Reſt, till he had, at leaſt made a little farther Progreſs: But in the Midſt of this diſpute two of the Neighbouring Gentlemen coming to viſit *Chriſtophil*, put an end to the conteſt, deciding it in Favour of *Pleonexus*.

But the next Morning being now come, *Philalethes* left his Bed with the Sun, and repair'd to the Gardens, amuſing himſelf with all the Varieties of them; and from them paſſing to the Wonders of Nature, and God, which he had heard the day before ſo well defended by *Chriſtophil*. He had not been long in theſe Contemplations, but he ſees *Chriſtophil*, who had by this Time done his Morning Devotions, and on enquiry after his Gueſts, was inform'd, that *Pleonexus* ſtill ſlept ſoundly; but that *Philalethes* had been ſome time in the Garden, which was the Occaſion of his coming out to ſeek him.

Philalethes had no ſooner ſpy'd him, but with ſpeedy Steps he advanc'd to meet him, Oh! *Chriſtophil* (cry'd out *Philalethes*) what a Night have I had. How mix'd with pleaſure and Pain! with Wonder and Fear! ſuch a View have you given me

me of *God*, that it Confounds, and Amazes me? His Wisdom, and His Pow'r are every Where evident, and the more I reflect on your Discourse, the more I am surpriz'd at my own Stupidity, so fatal and foolish a Blindness, that cou'd keep me so long in the Dark amidst so vast, and excellent a Light! Oh! the Pleasure, and Transports, I have Past this Night in, when my thoughts bent on the Miracles of God (which you before had fix'd in my Understanding by the clearness of your Representation, and Arguing) I wander'd round the Immense space; view'd the wonderful order of the Heavens, and pass'd to the Vegetive, Sensitive, and Animal Worlds, and every where found the Wonders of *Wisdom*, and *Power* which the Soul by a rational Enthusiasm lost it self in the glorious Contemplation of.

Proceed therefore (O *Christophil*) and answer the Eagerness of my Desires, and lead me to a farther View of the Nature of God; who must be all Beautiful, and Transporting, dispensing Pleasures that fill the Soul, and satisfie its Longings; that banish all the tumultuary Joys of Sense, that, aiming at finite and little Objects surrounded with Folly, and Pain, ev'n in the Height of Possession, afford but a weak Satisfaction, both in their short Duration, and Imperfection, not coming up to the Desire, and Expectation of the Soul. But the Contemplation of God, and his Works of Creation over-fills the utmost stretch of Imagination, and more than answers all the Faculties of the Mind. Give me therefore, more of this Celestial knowledge, that I may know the Extent of my Obligation to you, and almost bless the Follies, that were the Occasion of my Acquaintance with you.

I am wonderfully delighted (reply'd *Theophil*) to find you Master of so just an Apprehension, and of so good a Temper, as not to be asham'd of quitting an Error, when you are convinc'd of it. For some are so tenacious of their Principles, however false, or pernicious, that they think it a point of Honour to Persevere in an Error, rather than change their Opinion for Truth. 'Tis an Honour, I confess, that I cannot understand, since it is unworthy the Name of a Man; for, to renounce the Conviction of our Reason, is bidding adieu to the Distinction betwixt the Brutal, and the Human kind. But I shall have Reason to Bless God for the good Event of my Endeavours with you, and I wish there were any room to hope the same with *Pleonexus*, for I confess my Doubts of it are too strong, since there is so strange a Witchery, and Power in *Avarice*, that both my Reading, and Conversation scarce ever inform'd me of any one individual Person, that was ever recover'd of it. Nay tho' there is not the least Shadow of Reason to defend it, yet I have known Men eminent for their Sense in other things, such perfect Slaves to this folly, that it ruin'd all their real Perfections, and instead of the Veneration and Esteem, their Parts, Quality, and Post might have obtain'd them, got nothing but Contempt and Infamy in spight of all those Advantages, by which they might have been the most popular, and most beneficial to the Publick, of any of their Contemporaries. But lost in this sordid Appetite, they were perfectly dead to Glory, Honour, and *Christianity*. Hypocrisie indeed supply'd the Place of Religion, and to be thought Saints by Men, they were foolishly content to be Devils in the Eye of Heaven it self.

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This 'tis that makes me Fear that I only waſh an *Æthiop* in ſtriving to convince *Pleonexus*, yet fain would I have him by, if poſſible, to hear all I have to ſay; for perhaps ſomething or other might touch his Heart, and bring it to a ſence of his Folly.

On ſaying this *Chriſtophil* whiſtled for his Servant, whom he ſent to the Chamber where *Pleonexus* lay, to deſire his Company in the Garden, to enjoy ſo pleaſing a Morning, but Word was return'd that he had had a very ill night, and was not well, and therefore deſir'd to be excus'd from what there was no neceſſity of his hearing.

'Tis to no purpoſe (ſaid *Philalethes*) to delay my ſatisfaction for him, who when preſent Minds you not, and will always find ſome excuſe to avoid a Conviction, that muſt deſtroy his darling Paſſion. Let us therefore ſeat our ſelves in this Arbour, which is ſufficiently ſhaded from the Morning Sun, whoſe Heat, as far as it can penetrate here, will rather be pleaſing, than offenſive.

Well (return'd *Chriſtophil*) I will comply with your Deſires, and now take up that Diſcourſe of *the Nature of God*, which firſt our Supper, and then the Company interrupted laſt Night. But firſt let us join in a prayer, to that God, that he would inſpire me with ſuch a Knowledge of himſelf, as may enable me to expreſs him unblam'd.

On which they both kneel'd down, and *Chriſtophil*, addreſſing himſelf to the preſence of God, made an humble and zealous Prayer to him for that End. Which being done, you muſt not imagine (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) that I ſhould give you a full, and adequate Knowledge of the whole Nature of *God*; that indeed would be impoſſible, and you might very well ſay, as you did from this wrong Apprehenſion of the Matter, How can a *Finite* comprehend *Infinity*? For God has Infinite Attributes,

Attributes, and it will therefore take up an Infinite duration to conſider, and contemplate them; which is the Souls greateſt Happineſs in the *Beatific Viſion*. Nay ev'n in this Life Man finds in this only, the moſt Sincere, moſt Noble, and moſt tranſporting Pleaſure, and the moſt worthy of a Wiſe Man.

Tho' God be thus imcomprehenſible, and tho' it be ſo infinitely beyond the Power of any Creature to know him *wholly*, yet it has pleas'd the unbounded Goodneſs to impart a certain, and infallible Knowledge of ſo much of his Deity, as is ſufficient for the Conduct, and Happineſs of our Lives; enough to employ the whole Soul in the Contemplation of his Perfections, and in that Contemplation to give the Mind the Fulneſs of Joy, without *Satiety*.

I ſhall therefore, conſider firſt the Property, or Attributes of God in General, and then take a more diliberate view of each in Particular.

We muſt, therefore, remember, that Knowledge is convey'd to us by two ways, One a *Priare* (as the *Schoolmen* call it) that is when the Nature of a thing is known to us by its ſelf, without requiring our Underſtanding any other Natures, or Things, by the Knowledge of which we ſhould come to the Knowledge of this. The other way is call'd *à Poſteriori*, which is when to know the thing we are enquiring into the Nature of, it is Neceſſary that we ſhould be acquainted with the Nature of other things, which leads us as it were by ſo many ſteps and degrees to the Knowledge of that, we are ſeeking after. We know ſometimes, that certain Effects will follow certain Cauſes; as when we put the heavier Weight into one Scale, we know that the Balance will turn to that ſide, and the lighter Scale Aſcend.

Aſcend. Sometimes we endeavour to arrive at the Cauſe by the Effect. Thus we gather that the Reaſon why heavy Bodies bear down to the Centre, is becauſe they are diſturb'd, and removed by other Bodies, that endeavour to aſcend into the Superior Places.

The way, that we know God, without the Aſſiſtance of Revelation is a *Poſteriori*, or by aſcending through the various ſteps of the Creatures Exiſtence, to that of God, and ſince it is an undeniable Maxim, *That none can beſtow what he has not himſelf*, we gather that all the Properties of Creatures muſt be in that Being, from whom they all flow'd to the Creatures. And this is ſufficiently apparent from the proof, which I have already given you of *God*.

This being ſo, let us conſider how many kinds of Properties we find in the *Creatures*, that by them we may aſcend to thoſe of the *Creator*. There are therefore ſome Properties which we may call *Moral*, ſuch as we obſerve to be in Intelligent Creatures, and to which we give the name of *Moral*, becauſe they are concern'd about the *Manners*. There are others, which are *Phyſical* or *Natural*, which both Intelligent Beings, and thoſe which want Underſtanding ſhare in, and which have nothing to do with the Manners. *Goodneſs* for Example is a *Moral* and *Power* a *Phyſical* or Natural Property.

That we may begin with the *Phyſical Attributes* of *God*, there can be no manner of doubt but that the *Nature* which made, or gave Being to all others, muſt poſſeſs the Properties of all thoſe Natures it produc'd, but not indeed in the ſame degree, for in the Creator they are free from all, nor are they bounded with any of the Defects, that they have in the *Creatures*; ſince there is nothing without that Nature, that is the Parent

of

of all others, which cannot at all leſſen or bound them; nor any thing within that Nature, that is, not capable of containing them without all Limits. The Creatures for example *Exiſt*, and by conſequence *God*, who gave them their Beings muſt alſo *Exiſt*. But in this the Attribute of *Exiſtence* in God is infinitely beyond that in the *Creature*, for *God* Eternally and Neceſſarily *Exiſts*, the Creature Temporally and Dependantly, unleſs we ſuppoſe that ſomething *Exiſts*, which had no Beginning, nothing in this World could ever have had an *Exiſtence*, for who is mad enough to imagine that any thing could emerge out of Nothing. Thus we ſee that from the Knowledge, and Conſideration of our own *Exiſtence*, we trace that of the Deity, and from the Beginning of ours arrive at the neceſſary *Eternity* of his.

We may therefore ſeek in God the properties of the only two kinds of Natures we know, which are *Intelligent*, and *Corporeal*, provided we remember, that thoſe Properties which are limited with Defects in the Creatures, are perfect and without any Defect or Bounds in the Deity. The *Intelligent* Natures *Underſtand*, have *Volition*, and *Senſation*, *Imagine*, *Remember*, &c. All theſe Properties are therefore in *God*, but without thoſe limited defects, which they labour under in the *Creatures*. *God underſtands*, but at one View, and all things at Once. God has *Volition* but his Will is directed with the moſt Soveraign, and Supream Reaſon, without Inconſtancy, or mov'd by raſh, and unadviſed motives. God has *Senſation* but not affected in that manner as we are by the Creatures, that affect us when they give us a *Senſation*. God *Imagines*, that is, he has preſent before him the Images of all Corporeal things, but without any of thoſe Commotions with which they ſtrike us. God *Remembers*, but it is without Labour,

or

or Forgetfulneſs: Nor does he recollect thoſe things, of which for ſome time he had not Thought, but by a perfect Intuition beholds all things preſent before him.

Univerſal Extenſion conſider'd in General, and in the whole ſeems to be without Bounds, at leaſt we are not able to form in our Minds any Bounds to it. God is *Immenſe* too, but with an *Immenſity* that is not liable to be divided into parts, ſo that we may ſay this is a part of God, which is no where elſe. One Body drove againſt another removes that out of its place, however it is done. ſo God moves *Matter* as he thinks fit, becauſe he gave Motion to *Matter*, which in its own Nature it had not, but he does not move *Matter* as *Matter* moves *Matter*, ſo as to loſe ſo much Force, as he imparts to the *Matter mov'd*, nor as one ſuperfices moves and preſſes another.

Both Spirits and Bodies are ſaid to have *Power* to *do* ſome things, not all things, ſo that their Power is bounded by Limits, which it cannot paſs; but the *Power* of God reaches all *Double* things, that is, all things of which we can form any *Idea*. For what cannot he do who gave Beginning, and Exiſtence to all things?

And thus from the *Phyſical*, or *Natural* Properties of the Creatures, we arrive at thoſe of God. As to the *Moral* Properties, tho' we come to the Knowledge of them by proceeding by degrees from Inferiour to Superiour Things, yet the manner how that is done is ſomething different. Theſe *Moral* Attributes we call Vertues as we do in Men.

If we take a Judicious Survey of Human Nature we ſhall find, that no one Man is ſufficient to ſubſiſt alone, but that we want one anothers Help, and Aſſiſtance. This begets the mutual Duties of

Men

Men to one another, in which are plac'd those Habits of the Mind, which we call *Virtues*. Without these Life deserves not so Comfortable, and so desirable a Name. For what would become of Human Race, if there were no such thing as the Bonds of Love betwixt Relations, Friends, Fellow Citizens and the like. If there were no Justice, nor any of those Vertues, which bind, unite and secure Human Society.

Hence we draw our knowledge, that it is the Will of God that design'd Man for Society, without which he cannot live: that Man should cultivate and exercise those Vertues, which are most adapted to, and the most proper for the defence of that Society; and that he should avoid those Vices, by which it is most likely to be Injur'd, or dissolv'd. This being thus laid down, it follows, as a necessary consequence that these Virtues are grateful and agreeable to God; for what could oblige him to prescribe Laws to Man, by the very constitution of his Nature, which he himself should condemn: But if he approves them it is evident, that they are agreeable to his Nature, and so that he is indued with the same Virtues, as far as the difference betwixt the Divine, and Human Nature will suffer it. God therefore has the *Moral Attributes*, as well as the Human Mind.

Thus it is evident, that we arrive at the Knowledge of the Divine Attributes by rising up from those we find in the Creature, to the Creator. I shall therefore now come to a more particular Consideration on the several Attributes we this way discover, in the ever Blessed *Godhead*.

I shall begin with his *Eternity*, in which there are three things, which I shall chiefly consider. *First*, That *Eternity* is a Duration, that had no Beginning,

ning, nor can have any End. But that we may not give a *Negative* Attribute to God, it is eaſily made *Poſitive* by ſaying, that *God does always Exiſt*. Becauſe the firſt ſeems to the Philoſophers to be a meer Removal, of a Defect from God, by a Negative of his having a Beginning; the latter explains the Perfection by a poſitive Affirmation of of his perpetual Exiſtence. By this you will ſee the Niceties of the School, to make diſtinctions where each has an equal ſignification, and offers an equal Knowledge to the Mind.

When we ſay, that God is without End, it is but a Natural conſequence of his having no Beginning. For a Being that has had no Beginning, cannot deſtroy it ſelf, nor be deſtroyed by any other Being, all Natures beſides flowing from him, are of infinitely leſs Force, Power, and Duration.

From hence riſes our ſecond Conſideration of the *Eternity* of God, which is, That the ſeveral Parts of this Duration are ſo firmly United, that it is Impoſſible to ſeperate them from one another, contrary to what we experience in the duration of Creatures, which have had a Beginning. For it does not at all follow, that becauſe we now Exiſt, therefore we ſhall do ſo to morrow, but to have no End of Duration, is a neceſſary Conſequence of having no Beginning.

The third Obſervation we make in this *Eternity* of God, is that he receives no Addition of Duration from its Succeſſion, for after a thouſand thouſand Myriades of Ages, God grows no Older, than he was from *Eternity*; nor will he either loſe or gain any Attribute or Quality, from the endleſs Succeſſion of Duration to come; for ſhould we add *Infinite* to *Infinite* it does not magnifie, add to, or encreaſe the firſt, for *Infinity* includes all *Space*, *Duration*, and *Numbers*. But when I

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ſhall come to the *Immutability* of God, I ſhall have occaſion farther to conſider this Point of Gods receiving no Addition, or ſuffering no Diminution.

I hope I ſpeak theſe things as intelligibly to you, as their Nature will bear: For tho' theſe Conſideration may have been a little out of your Way, yet they bear with them ſo much Evidence, that a man of tolerable Senſe may have a perfect knowledge of all I have, or ſhall ſay on ſo ſublime a Contemplation, as that of God and his Attributes.

Believe me, Sir, (reply'd *Philalethes*) all you have ſaid is firmly fix'd in my Mind, and tho' I have been too much an Idler in ſerious Reflections, and too great a ſtranger to ſolid Philoſophy, yet in my opinion, what you have ſaid, is ſo very natural, and eaſy, that a Man has no Loſs in being ignorant of the Subtiltie of the *Schcol* to help him apprehend your Meaning. Common ſenſe, and common Underſtanding will do it. Building on this, and hoping that you will excuſe an Error in ſo unskilful a Head, you muſt give me leave to urge a Thought, which your Diſcourſe has furniſh'd me with, which is that *Eternal Now* as *Cowly* deſcribes *Eternity*, which in my Opinion ſeems to exclude a *Succeſſion* in the Divine Duration; for a Succeſſion in it, appears to me to give it Parts, and by conſequence we may at leaſt ſuppoſe a Separation, or Interval of them.

You have accidentally (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) hit on a *School* Nicety, and which was borrowed from the *Platoniſts*. For, ſay they, there is this difference betwixt the Duration of Creatures, and that of the Creator; the firſt is compos'd of Succeſſive Parts, but that of God hath none, but it is as *Boethius* defines it, *The whole, and perfect Poſſeſſion at once of a Life without End.* But the Occaſion

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of this Error of the *Platoniſts*, and their followers ſeems to be, that they thought it incompatible with the Immutability of God, that his Exiſtence ſhould not be whole, and altogether; ſince by Succeſſion he would ſeem to have loſt the Parts, that are gone, and to gain thoſe that are preſent, or to come. But when you ask them how they can conceive, or form any Idea of the Duration of any Nature, and its Coexiſtence with that Succeſſive Exiſtence of the Creatures, without Succeſſion? they anſwer you, That it is a thing inconceivable, and tranſcends our weak Capacity.

But if we acknowledge, as we ought, that from all Eternity, the Properties of all Created Beings were in God, and that none of them can ever depart from him, or any New joyn themſelves to him ſo, as to make him leſs, or more perfect; and that the Exiſtence of God is of abſolute Neceſſity in it ſelf, that is, that he cannot but exiſt without the moſt abſurd Contradiction in Nature. If, I ſay, we own theſe particulars, which you ſee I have prov'd, in what do we detract from the Excellence of God, if we ſay, that his Duration is Succeſſive, ſince we can otherwiſe form no Idea, or Conception of it.

He would rob God of his *Immutability*, who ſhould aſſert, that God gained, or loſt certain Attributes, or Perfections; or that there were a poſſibility of his periſhing. But certainly thoſe, who deny both theſe, can never be argued guilty of ſuppoſing a mutable Deity. This conteſted Succeſſion of Exiſtence being only an outward Term, which neither adds to, nor diminiſhes the thing, can include no Imperfection. It muſt be confeſs'd, that this Succeſſion in the Creature is joyn'd with ſome Defect, for

while a man in Succeſſion of Time grows old he loſes ſome Qualities, and gets others; but if neither of theſe hapned, the Succeſſion it ſelf could not be any Imperfection. Thus, therefore, it could be no Imperfection in the Duration of the Deity, where it is free from all theſe and every other Imaginable Defect.

We muſt alſo farther confeſs, that the Duration of God cannot be meaſur'd by Days, Weeks, Months, Years, and Ages like ours, for the endleſs Repetition of Myriades of Myriades of Ages, would not ſuffice to meaſure out his Eternal Exiſtence. Nor, if we ſhould diſtinguiſh any Part of that immenſe Duration, by Hours, Days, and Years (as that, for example, from the Creation of the World to this Day) can we number thoſe Days, Hours and Years any otherwiſe, than in Reſpect of our ſelves. For the coming parts do not add to thoſe of Eternity, that are now paſt, for Eternity, cannot be more Eternal than it is, ſince as I have ſaid it includes all Duration.

I cannot therefore ſee any Reaſon why we ſhould admit this *Platonic* Eternity, ſince on one ſide, it is not built on *Revelation*, nor on the other on Reaſon, it being abſolutely unintelligible, as ev'n themſelves confeſs. I muſt fairly own, that when our Mind with any conſiderable Intenſneſs contemplates this Succeſſion of Duration, it is, as it were quite ſwallow'd up in it. But if we deſcend into our ſelves, we ſhall clearly obſerve, that the Mind is of neceſſity born to that Conception of *Eternity*.

The next Divine Attribute I ſhall conſider is the *Immenſity*: the Knowledge of which as I have ſaid, is drawn from the apparent *Immenſity* of *Matter*. For it ſeems very abſurd to imagine, that

that God who has evidently many more Attributes, and Properties than *Matter*, who moves it, as he pleaſes, which in its own Nature, is Sluggiſh and without Motion, ſhould be inferiour to Matter in *Immenſity*, and that there ſhould be a Part of *Matter*, that reaches beyond the Power, and Energy of *God*: which yet muſt be, unleſs we allow, that God is *Immenſe*, and acts through the whole infinite Extenſion of *Matter* and *Space*. Nay if God were not *Immenſe*, there would be an Infinite Space of the Extended *Matter*, to which the Divine Power would never reach.

And here the *Chriſtian* Philoſophers produce the Creation of *Matter* by God, for ſince God Created all *Matter* as has been prov'd, and the Extenſion of this Created *Matter* is *Immenſe* the Being, that produc'd it muſt certainly be *Immenſe* likewiſe, for None can give a Property, which he has not himſelf.

You may perhaps, at length ask me what this *Immenſity* of God is, ſince I have rather given an Obſcure Deſcription of it, than a Definition? I muſt anſwer you, that this *Immenſity* is one of thoſe Things, which I formerly told you were not known by themſelves, but *à Poſteriore*, that is, by our prior Knowledge of other Things; and that all we can gather from thence is, that God can, and does with his Preſence, and immediately in himſelf act throughout the whole Infinite extent of *Matter* and *Space*. But if you will needs ſtill purſue your Query, and demand how, and which way he acts, and how, and in what manner he is preſent? I muſt own, and confeſs, that it ſurpaſſes our Underſtanding; tho' it is manifeſt from the Creation of the World and Man; which are undeniable Arguments that God does act on *Matter*, and that immediately, by his own Pre-

ſence. It is better, therefore, to own, that we do not know the *Modus*, or manner of the Thing, at the Knowledge of which Thing it ſelf, we only arrive by our Knowledge of other Things. All attempts beyond it are but ſubtle Amuſements, which end in giving God *Corporeity* without Motion, and the like, which are abſolutely contradictory, and inconceivable. When therefore we ſay that God is *Immenſe*, as well as *Matter* and *Space*, we mean that he is every where preſent in his own Perſon with *Matter* and *Space*, and that he acts on *Matter* and in *Space* immediately, without any other Medium, tho' we do not know the *Modus* or Manner of his Action, or Preſence, the Knowledge of which is of no Uſe, or Conſequence to our Happineſs.

From this Conſideration of the *Immenſity* of God, we eaſily paſs to his *Spirituality*. All Beings are call'd *Spirits*, which in their Natures have *Underſtanding*, and *Will*, and certainly no one can doubt, but that God in this Senſe is a *Spirit*. There is a Neceſſity that the Being, who gave Exiſtence to the Human Mind, muſt have all the Properties we find in that, and thoſe much more perfect, and ample, and many more in Number, as well as excellence. I have already ſhown, that tho' God has in himſelf all the Properties of the Creation, yet that they re in him without thoſe defects, which they labour with in the Creature. The ſame may be ſaid of theſe particular of *Spirits*. I ſhall only here obſerve, that we can make no difficulty of allowing him all the moſt eminent Properties, from whoſe Superexcellent Exiſtence all Beings receiv'd their Beginning, and all their Properties, whilſthis were Abſolute and of Neceſſity.

To avoid the needleſs Diſputes of Particulars, it is ſufficient for us, to ſay in general, that God is a *Spiritual*, as well as an *Immenſe*, and an *Eternal* Being. I now therefore come to conſider more at large the Properties of God, which hold a Likeneſs analogous to thoſe of *Spirits*. And firſt of the Divine *Underſtanding*, and *Omnipotence*.

If we could not eaſily demonſtrate from that *Underſtanding*, which God has beſtow'd on Man, that he has an *Underſtanding* infinitely more perfect himſelf, which was the Eternal Original of ours, yet certainly no man in his Wits, when he views the World, but from his admirable Diſpoſition and Order muſt allow it; for thoſe wild Syſtems of its coming from *Chance*, as I have already confuted them, ſo they meet with very few open Patrons, as having ſo great a Spice of Madneſs and Ignorance obvious to the moſt common Capacity.

Not to hold you therefore with the long, and tedious Arguments of the Philoſophers, by which they uſed to prove this ſelf evident Propoſition, I ſhall here only enquire into two things, Firſt, The Manner, or by what Means God exerciſes the Attributes of *Underſtanding*, and next what are the Objects of that *Intellection*, according to which two, the Cognition or Knowledge of God uſes to be divided into its ſeveral Claſſes.

If we look into the manner of our acquiring the Knowledge of things, we find it proceed either from *Senſation*, or *Reflection*; that is, the *Corporeal* Objects we know by the Means of the Motion of the Brain, and by the Images of thoſe things, which we ſee being plac'd before the Mind; and the *Spiritual* by the Ideas, which preſent themſelves to our Mind. But God does not Under-

ſtand after this Manner, ſince there are certain Defects, and Imperfections in our *Intellection*, which that of the Deity can by no Means be ſubject to. God is Conſcious of himſelf, for that's an Attribute inſeparable from the Nature of all Intelligent Beings. But here is the difference betwixt God, and us, for God has a full and a perfect view, an abſolute, and an entire Knowledge of his whole Nature and Being, but we do not know the whole Nature of our Minds; for we are Created by God, who has ſet Bounds to our Faculties, which we are incapable of ſurpaſſing. But that Eternal Being, whoſe Exiſtence was Neceſſary, and without Beginning could receive Nothing from any other Nature, or could (as, I may ſay) confine himſelf.

God underſtands not from a *Senſation* proceeding from ſome Motions in his Nature, or the foreign Impulſe of Objects, as we do, for he is not made as Man, nor can his Creatures affect him in that manner, for he would elſe have a dependance on them, as being liable to various Changes from the variety of Objects; which is both abſurd, and unintelligible.

Nor does he underſtand Spiritual Things, as we do by the Intervention or Medium of certain Ideas, which do not depend on him. There are a great many things which we labour in vain to Underſtand; our Capacity does not keep pace with our Deſires; for thoſe Ideas, which ſeem to preſent the Thing, we purſue, to our Minds, we cannot fix in our Underſtanding, with all the Application, and Intention our Nature is capable of. Innumerable are the things we are ignorant of, ev'n in God himſelf, nor can we invent, or imagine any means to arrive at them. God therefore cannot underſtand and know Spiritual things

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in the ſame Manner, that we do; for it is Impoſſible that he who gave all beings their ſeveral Properties, and their Relations to each other, *&c.* ſhould not know what they are.

Beſides, the things are extreamly few, which we know by a bare Intuition, moſt of what, we have any knowledge of, we are forc'd to come at through the windings of Demonſtrations, which are ſometimes prolix, a d tedious enough. But the Reaſon, I have already alledg'd proves, that God with one ſingle Intuition, or View perfectly knows all the Properties and Relations of all his Creatures. In Man the Faculty of Underſtanding is ſo confin'd, and ſtreighten'd as I may ſay, that we cannot diſtinctly Underſtand many things at the ſame Time, and we are compell'd to conſider ſeparately thoſe propoſitions, that have a mutual dependance on one another. But it is moſt certain, that he, who gave this Underſtanding to Man, ſtands in need of none of theſe troubleſom Deductions of Propoſitions.

Notwithſtanding therefore, that we term God an Intelligent Being, it muſt not be ſuppos'd that he Underſtands in the ſame Manner, that we do. But then you may ask me, ſince there is ſo vaſt a difference betwixt our Intellection, or Manner of Underſtanding, and of Gods, what is that Manner by which God exerciſes that Attribute? Here again I muſt confeſs, that theſe defects I have already ſhown in the Human Underſtanding, allow me only to ſee that there is this great difference betwixt them, but not to know the *Modus* or Manner of the Divine Natures *Intellectim.*

All things that are *Knowable* either to the Human or divine Nature may be refer'd to theſe four Claſſes, 1. *Paſt*. 2. *Preſent*. 3. *Future*. 4. *Poſſible*. Man knows ſome of theſe certainly, many of them but very doubtfully, but moſt of them not at all. But it is plain from the Reaſons already produc'd, that God who Made Man firſt can do more, than all Mankind put together, and that he has a knowledge infinitely more large and extenſive. Since God did always Exiſt, and ſince he always does, and ever will govern and direct all things, he muſt of neceſſity perfectly know all his Creatures, and ſee what can be done by their Power, or will be done in their various and manifold Combinations: For it would have been Impoſſible, that he ſhould either have made them, or preſerv'd his Juriſdiction over them in their Regiment, and Adminiſtration, without a perfect knowledge of theſe things: and from hence we evidently conclude, that God knows all things.

Our Memory is the Store-houſe or Repoſitory of paſt things, by which we hinder them from entirely vaniſhing from us; But they are in the Memory in ſuch a Manner, that they are preſent in our Minds only in that individual Moment of our actual thinking of them. But then there are numberleſs things which we loſe either by want of Attention, or through Neceſſity, whoſe eſcape from us, we cannot help, all which, no body can doubt, are certain proofs, and marks of weakneſs, and for that Reaſon every Body agrees, that they are abſolutely baniſh'd from God, as incapable of falling into his Nature. When therefore God is ſaid to remember a thing, it is only ſpoke to the Apprehenſion of the People.

Mans Preſence is bounded by certain Limits, inſomuch, that he is only ſaid to be preſent, who ſees the Thing; and whatever is done out of our

our Sight, we ſay is done out of our Preſence. The Angels perhaps may have a larger Extent of Preſence; But God who is as we have ſeen, every where preſent by his *Immenſity*, ſees all things by himſelf, and in his own Preſence. But God is not only Preſent to the *Corporeal* Actions, but alſo to the *Spiritual*, that is to the Thoughts of the Mind; for he made *Spirits*, as well as *Bodies*, and is therefore, as well skill'd in his Spiritual, as Corporeal Works. Men indeed who have no other way of knowing extrinſick things, but by Impulſe on the external Senſes, have no Senſation of thoſe things which do not ſtrike the Senſes, ſuch as are the Thoughts of other Men. But God who made thoſe Organs of the Body, has no need of their help to obſerve what is done; *He* therefore as eaſily perceives the internal Actions of Spirits, as we do the Motion of Bodies from place to place.

All future Things are either ſuch as muſt *Neceſſarily* come to paſs, as ſuch things, as are done by the Intervention of meer Bodies; or elſe *contingent*, as depending on the *Free Agency* of Spiritual Subſtances. The firſt no Man ever doubted of, and in my opinion the latter has not more room for doubt. For firſt if God did not foreſee theſe *Contingent* Events as well as the *Mechanic*, he would every day gather the Knowledge of Things, which he knew not before, which is directly contrary to the Nature of God. But his Foreknowledge, does not give any neceſſary Impulſe to the Creature ſo as to neceſſitate or determine him to that Event. But all Times being preſent to God, who knows all the Inclinations, Motions and Thoughts of Spirits *in perpetuum*, may very well be allowed, to ſee what Courſe they will take, what they will do by the Freedom

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of their Choice, and by consequence know all Contingencies, that is all the free Actions of free Agents.

The fourth and last of those Things *Knowable*, was *Things Possible*, and it is no hard Matter to understand how God should know all *Possible* Things, if you remember what is already establish'd, that the Nature of all are clearly known to God, by which he may evidently see what can be done by their Help, or Power either separately, or Conjunctively; and since he is fully conscious of his own Perfections, he must know the Extent of his Power, that is what his Omnipotence is able to do, and what are repugnant in their Natures, and Contradictions.

What I have to say of the *Will*, and Actions of God I shall comprize in a very little compass, the Question being so very Obscure and Difficult, and we having so few Helps to assist us. But I would not have you suppose I mean by the *Will* here, his Pleasure or Commands, that is what is pleasing, or displeasing to him, for of that I shall produce sufficient demonstration, but here I mean the *Willing*, *Volition*, or Action of the *Will*, its Manner, and Motives of acting. For tho' one, and the same God both *Wills* and *Understands*, yet since to *Understand*, and to *Will* are two different Actions, we make this Distinction of the *Intellect* and *Will* of God. But here in the first Place I, and all Men ought to own our Ignorance, for we are so far from a clear sight into this Matter, that we do not so much as know how God is inclin'd to *Will*, because we are to seek in the Manner, and Mode of his Intellection, or Knowing. This indeed we may safely affirm, in general Terms, that God does not *Will*, or *Act* without the most Wise and Supream Reasons, agreeable to the Dignity of his own Nature.

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We are to ſeek in the *Manner* of Gods acting, tho' we ſee, and know Millions of Things done by him. Some would have it, that God acts on his Creatures by I know not what ſort of Effluvium proceeding from himſelf to them; but theſe Gentlemen not underſtanding what they ſay themſelves, might as well have ſaid nothing. Others will have it, that God *Acts* by his *Will*, inſomuch that his bare *Willing* ſuch a Thing, without any farther *Action* is ſufficient to produce the Thing. But tho' it be moſt certainly true, that whatever God *Wills* to have done, will be done, yet it does not thence follow, that the Things themſelves are the immediate Effect of his *Willing* them.

It has been urg'd, that we know of no other Action of God but that he *Wills*, and that therefore we ought to attribute no other to God. But this way of reaſoning ſuppoſes, that we know all the Properties of a Spirit, becauſe we aſſert, that there is nothing in the Spiritual Nature, which we do not know. But ſuppoſing this, who inform'd them that God acts like thoſe Spirits, which we do know, that is the Human Mind? 'Tis certainly a very great Raſhneſs to affirm, that the Human, and the Increated Mind are alike in this particular, when we evidently diſcover ſo vaſt a Difference in all things elſe. The principal Action of God that we at leaſt know, is his Creation of the Univerſe out of Nothing, which point I have already diſcuſs'd in my Proof of a Deity. Nor will I here run into the ſubtil Enquiry whether God was free in the Creation, or neceſſitated to it by his Goodneſs, and the other Attributes of his Nature and Eſſence, ſince it all comes to the ſame thing, and affords nothing but uſeleſs Speculations: whereas we have room

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little enough for Enquiries, that are material to our preſent Subject. And I think them ſufficiently forgetful of their own Ignorance, and of the Method, by which we arrive at that ſmall Knowledge we have in Divine Things, (ſmall in Compariſon of what we do not know, tho' we know enough for our Happineſs and Wonder) who affirm, that God is not free in any of his Actions, that is that he neceſſarily *Acts*, as he neceſſarily *Exiſts*. We do not know how the *Will* of God is inclin'd to *Action*, nor can we talk of thoſe Matters any other way, than by the Anolagy they bear to thoſe Properties which we find in our own Minds, and by which *à Poſteriore* we arrive at our Sentiments of the Properties of God. But ſince there is no Proportion betwixt the two, and that we cannot by One, which we only know in Part, arrive to the whole knowledge of the other, by this Partial means, I think it moſt worthy of a Wiſe man to ſuſpend his Judgment, and acknowledge his Ignorance.

After Mentioning the Creation, and the Actions of God, it would Naturally follows to ſpeak here of the Providence, and Concurrence of God in the Government of the World. But becauſe I ſhall be very particular in my Vindication of that, as a Point, on which you have both laid ſo great a ſtreſs tho' this be its proper place, I ſhall reſerve that to the laſt Attribute, which I ſhall conſider.

I ſhall therefore proceed to his *Infinity*, and *Omnipotence*. The Attributes of God are ſaid to be infinite in *Number*, and in *Degree*. The divine Perfections are *Infinite* in *Number*, becauſe God comprehends in himſelf all Poſſible Properties, which are ſo many in *Number*, that they can never be exhauſted. And this is evident from the Power,

which

which God has to do all Poſſible Things, or of Making out of Nothing all Things, of which we can form any Idea, as I ſhall demonſtrate immediately: But *none can give what he has not himſelf*, as I have often ſaid; God, therefore, muſt have all poſſible Properties in himſelf, which are in Number infinite.

Did we know all the Beings, that are in the whole Univerſe, we might perhaps ev'n thence draw the Infinity of God; for it is not improbable but that the Various Species of Beings already exiſtent, may be infinite. *Infinite* is here taken in a limited ſenſe, in regard of Mans Capacity of Numbring them; infinite in Number, and Degree, from *Nothing*, to that *Supream Being*, who made them *All* out of *Nothing*. This, at leaſt, is certain, that it is not unworthy of that infinite Beneficence of the Omnipotent Workman, to have produc'd an infinite Number of Creatures, and on which he might Shower his inexhauſtible Treaſure. But ſince all we can ſay on this point will amount to no more, than a meer Conjecture, I ſhall build nothing on this Suppoſition, and ſhall only inſiſt on the former Argument for the *Infinity* of the Properties of God.

The *Divine Perfections* are likewiſe *Infinite* in Degree, that is, becauſe they are without all Bounds, and extend to all Things, that have any Relation to them. The *Duration* of God, for example, is infinite, becauſe it never had Beginning, nor ever will have End. The Divine *Knowledge* is term'd infinite becauſe it extends to all *Knowable Things*, nor is there any thing in Nature, that we can Name, of which we can ſay—*thus far reaches the KNOWLEDGE of God, and no farther*; or that *here terminates*, or *theſe are the Bounds of the Divine Knowledge*.

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When I tell you, that God knows all things, I do not mean that he *Knows* Contradictions, for they are Nothing, and by conſequence not the Objects of Knowledge. No reaſonable Man, for example, would accuſe me of detracting from the Omniſcience of God, when I ſay, that he does not know a *Square Circle*, ſince a *Square Circle* is a contradictory Idea, and indeed a meer Nothing. So that as long, as we allow God the Knowledge of all things Knowable, and exclude no Propoſition, that can be underſtood, we cannot be ſaid to circumſcribe, or ſet Bounds to the *Divine Knowledge*, by denying him the Science of that, which in its own Nature cannot be underſtood.

The ſame may be ſaid of the *Omnipotence* of God; which is a *Faculty, Attribute, or Power of doing all things, that are conceivable*, that is all things that are not Contradictions in themſelves, or to his own Eſſence. I have already obſerv'd, that we come to the Knowledge of the divine *Power*, from our Conſciouſneſs of a Capacity of doing ſome things our ſelves: and we gather that God is more powerful than we, becauſe he has done Things, that we are not capable of doing, as for Example, to omit all other Created Beings, his giving a Beginning to Human Kind, when they had no Exiſtence.

But when we reflect, that God exiſted from all Eternity, and that he owes none of all his Attributes to any other Beginning, but that he poſſeſs'd them eternally *from*, and *in* Himſelf, by the very Eſſence of his own Nature, we eaſily glide as it were into the Acknowledgment, that his *Power*, as well as all his other Attributes, is *Infinite*. For that Being, which is ſo excellent in its own Nature, as to be indu'd with an infinite Duration, as he receiv'd nothing from any other Being, ſo muſt his

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Attributes be without Bounds. Thoſe Natures only have *Finite* Qualities, that receiv'd them, and their Being from the Will and Pleaſure of another, who ſet them thoſe Bounds, that were moſt agreeable to his Wiſdom. But this will never hold of that Supream Being, who has no Original, nor any Bounds, but what he pleaſes to ſet himſelf.

From whence it follows, that the Divine Nature being its own Original, and Bounds has no Limits to his Power, or that he can do whatever can be done. There is nothing, that we can conceive in our Minds, or have any Idea of, to which the *Power* of God does not extend; for all thoſe things of which we can form any Idea, are *Poſſible*, or *Doable* Things. But whatever will afford us no manner of Idea or Notion, is a Contradiction, and a Contradiction is no more the Object of *Power*, than of *Knowledge*, for it is a *meer Nothing*.

The *Immutability* of God is look'd on as the Band of all the other Divine Attributes, by which he is incapable of acquiring any Property, which he did not Poſſeſs before, or of loſing any Perfection, which he did Poſſeſs. This *Immutability* flows, as it were, from a general conſideration of his *Eternity*. For that Nature who was always, as he ſtood in need of no other Cauſe to give him Being, ſo neither could it need any other Cauſe, Eternally to have furniſh'd him with all imaginable Properties. But if this Nature was poſſeſs'd of all theſe Properties, he could never loſe any one, becauſe ſuch a Nature would never caſt off any of his Perfections; nor could he be depriv'd of them by any other leſs powerful Being; and all Beings proceeding from him muſt of Conſequence be inferiour to him.

But the *Immutability* of God falls under a double Conſideration, firſt in Reſpect of the Divine Nature

ture, and next in Regard of his Decrees. *Immutability*, as far, as it regards the Divine Nature ſignifies, that there can be no Change, or Alteration made in the Properties, and Attributes of God. Nor can there be any in his Decrees, leaſt God ſhould ſeem to change his *Will* by unexpected Accidents, or by a Change of Council, which might ariſe from ſome ſort of Ignorance.

There ſeems no manner of Difficulty, from the Reaſons already alledg'd to comprehend this *Immutability* of the Nature, and Attributes of God: But the *Immutability* of his Decrees is not ſo obvious, if we Judge of them by his outward, and viſible Actions. God decreed, for Example, to perfect the Creation of the World in ſuch a certain Time, or poinnt of Duration, and he decreed, that the Alteration of the Seaſons, and of all Sublunary things ſhould be *Various*, which may perhaps, at firſt ſight ſeem a *Variety* in his Counſels. But this Difficulty will vaniſh if you remember, that there is a twofold Change or Mutation of Actions: One is ſuddain, as when a Thing happens that was not foreſeen, or expected; as when a Pilot by the ſuddain ſhifting of the Winds ſteers to a contrary Port, to what his courſe was directed. But this is a Change that God cannot be liable to, becauſe he forſees all things. But there is another Change, that has nothing unworthy of the Nature of God, and that is a Change that is already conceiv'd, and decreed in the Mind before the Thing happens, that requires that Change. If for Example, any one foreſees, that ſuch Events will happen, and that on their happening he ſhall be oblig'd to act in another Manner, than he does now, for God always remains in himſelf the ſame, notwithſtanding his outward, and extrinſic Actions may vary.

God

God decreed in himſelf from all Eternity to Create the World in a certain point of Eternal Duration (which he only knew, as only capacious of whole Eternity) which Decree he at length in the deſtin'd Minute put in Execution. Tho' this Action of Creation was not Coeternal with the Decree, yet it does not in any way derogate from the divine Perfection, and Excellence, ſince it was the Execution of an Eternal Decree, and not the Effect of a ſuddain Reſolution. Thus the Changes and continual Viciſſitudes of Corporeal Things, as the Variety of the Seaſons, and the like, in no Meaſure affect the Divine *Immutability*, ſince they always proceed in a certain Order, and follow certain Laws once Eſtabliſh'd, from which they neither do, nor can ever vary.

It has been Objected, that the doing an Action in one certain Time, which he does in no Other, is an Argument of an Alteration in God. He exerted, for example, that Action of Creation but once, never doing it before nor repeating it ſince. To this I reply, that it muſt be own'd, that here is ſome Mutation, or Change in this particular, but ſince Action is but the accidental Effect of the Properties of the Agent, it gives no Change to the Properties, if it do not exhauſt the Faculty of the Agent, The Actions of God would bring a Change on his Attributes, if his Power could be exhauſted by thoſe Actions. But that is a ſuppos'd Effect, which no Body imagines. Thus, therefore, if it could be ſaid, that God exerted any Action oppoſite, or contrary to his Virtues, that indeed would place in God an Alteration unworthy of his Deity. But ſince all the Actions of God abſolutely, and entirely agree with his Virtues, that Change, which may be thus ſuppos'd in God, does not at all leſſen, or claſh with his *Immutability*.

There is, a great Affinity betwixt the *Immutability*, and the *Simplicity* of God, I mean the Oppoſite to *Compoſition*. By this Attribute the Philoſophers make God ſo ſimple, and uncompounded a Being, that he is abſolutely free from all Mixture, or Compoſition of any Kind whatever, He is not compounded of diviſible Parts, as Bodies are, for then he would be liable to be affected, and chang'd by his Creatures; he is not compounded of *Eſſence*, and *Exiſtence* for theſe in God are inſeperable ſince God Eſſentially exiſts.

I ſhall paſs over the Subtilties of the Metaphyſicians in this place, as of no Uſe to my Purpoſe, nor of any weight in themſelves, and proceed to the *Unity* of God.

Having already prov'd that there is a God, and explain'd ſeveral of his *Phyſical* Attributes. There only remains for us to conſider the UNITY of that Supream Nature from whom all Things derive their Being. I have already demonſtrated, that there is a Neceſſity, that there ſhould be ſome Eternal Cauſe of all Things, which have had a Beginning. But it may not yet indeed ſeem ſufficiently determin'd, whether we ſhould call it a *Cauſe*, or *Cauſes*.

If we look into the Arguments, by which we have prov'd the Eternity of at leaſt ſome Cauſe, or other, we ſhall not be able to find *One*, that can give the leaſt Suſpicion of *many* Coeternal *Cauſes*. It would be too tedious to repeat *all* the Arguments for the Deity, *One* only ſhall ſuffice. I ſaid, that all things, which had a Beginning, muſt be produc'd by ſome other Being, who had none, but was Eternal, becauſe *Nothing* could ariſe out of *Nothing* by it ſelf into Being: Whence appear'd the Neceſſity of ſome Eternal Cauſe without Beginning to give their Original to all Things, that were not of Eternal Exiſtence. But to gain this

this End, and render our Argument invincible; *One Cauſe* is ſufficient for all that is done; and there is no Need of a Multitude of Eternal Cauſes, to effect what one may as well do.

The Philoſophers have argu'd againſt the Plurality of Gods from the Confuſion, that many Infinites muſt produce, in their Oppoſition to one another, which would naturally hinder one anothers Actions. For tho' we allow, that many *Eternal Cauſes* would all concur in what is agreeable in their *Virtues*, and *Perfections*, yet that there is a Poſſibility that they may diſſent in matters indifferent, which are equally good. Suppoſe, for Example, two contrary Things, oppoſite, and deſtructive to one another, and both Subjects of the free Agency of theſe ſeveral *Eternal Cauſes*; and ſuppoſe one *Eternal Cauſe*, deſigns (by his Freedom of Agency, and Choice) to do One, and another *Eternal Cauſe* (by the ſame Freedom of Agency and Choice) the Contrary, what Diſſention muſt follow, and what Confuſion of all Things? But let us be particular, and ſuppoſe that one of theſe Deities is for the Suns cutting the Equinoctial Line obliquely, and another Deity would have the Sun follow it in a Parallel Motion: What would be the Effect of this Conteſt? One muſt of Neceſſity, and whether he Will or not, give way to the Other, or the Contention would be for ever; and he that yielded muſt be inferiour to the Other, which would contradict their ſuppos'd Coeternity.

'Tis certain, that we find nothing in the Make, or Adminiſtration of our *Vortex*, which in the leaſt requires more, than One ſupream Cauſe. All things go on in their Conſtant Order; and the Inferiour Mechanic Cauſes always act in the ſame Manner, which ſufficiently ſhows, that they are guided and govern'd by the Rule or Regiment

of *One only Supream Cauſe and Agent*. And whoever would be ſo mad, as to Imagine a different preſiding Deity over every *Turbilion*, or *Vortex*, will be under a Neceſſity of proving this bold Affirmation, and to give Subſtantial Reaſons, and Motives for this Partition-Treaty of the Gods both in the Formation, and Goverment of every *Vortex*.

But it muſt be own'd, that the *Unity* of the Supream Cauſe on which all others depend, does not exclude many inferiour, or ſecond Cauſes; by which, as by ſo many Officers, or Inſtuments the CAUSE of CAUSES governs, and directs All Things.

I am now arriv'd at the *Moral Attributes* of God, which, when I touch'd in general, I ſhow'd how we form'd the Ideas of them, and which we call *Virtues*. But I ſhall now be a little more particular on that Argument.

We may divide the Virtues of Mankind into three ſorts according to the Objects to which they are referr'd: That is, 1. To our Selves, 2. To our Neighbour, 3. And to God. We are led by the very Conſtitution of Human Affairs, as it were by the Hand to theſe Virtues; for if we act agreeably to the Neceſſities of Society, we, in that very thing are Virtuous: and this I muſt endeavour to prove. For unleſs we are perfectly appriz'd of this, we muſt of Neceſſity have a falſe Idea of the Virtues of the Deity.

The Aim of thoſe Moral Virtues, which regard our ſelves, is that we do not make either Body, or Mind duller, and unfit for thoſe Offices, for which Nature deſign'd them, and by that Means be diſappointed, by our own fault of that Happineſs, which elſe we might obtain. Thus the *Love of Knowledge* in *Truth*, and *Things Uſeful*, aims at opening a way for us to arrive at Happineſs. *Sobriety*, which has a more

parti-

particular Eye to the Body, is a Virtue, that regulates our Appetites, and guards us from the ill Effects of Intemperance; leaſt that render the Mind duller, and more unfit for thinking, than it would be by obſerving the Laws of *Sobriety*; and make the Body infirm by too large a ſhare of Drink, and Food; by which we ſhould become unapt to all Things, and unable to diſcharge the Duties of either Body or Mind, in almoſt all particulars. Whence it appears, that to direct our Actions according to our Nature, is ſtrictly to follow the Precepts of Virtue,

There are in God indeed no Virtues to direct him to ſhun Evil, and Inconveniencies, for his Nature is uncapable and unſuſceptible of any ſuch Thing. But God has ſo form'd and diſpos'd us, that we lie under a Neceſſity of Cultivating, and Practiſing thoſe Virtues, if we would be happy; from whence it inevitably follows, that theſe Virtues are agreeable to the Divine Nature, and are therefore approv'd by God. For how can we imagine, that what is ſo very conducive to the Preſervation, and Happineſs of the Work ſhould not be agreeable, and pleaſing to the Workman? But that *Judgment* of God, by which he approves theſe Virtues, is a Virtue, which anſwer to ours, as far as the vaſt Difference of the Divine, and Human Nature will permit.

Again—— As we ought to act according to the true Dictates of our Nature, ſo God neceſſarily acts agreeably, and according to his. God cannot but love *Truth*, becauſe he cannot be ignorant of, or fear any Evil from it. He muſt of Neceſſity act contrary to his Excellent, and Tranſcendent Nature if he approve, or love a Lye. The *Love of Truth* therefore is a Virtue, that is in God, as well, as in Us.

All the Moral Vertues, that regard our Neighbour are compriz'd in, and tend all to this one Point *Do as you would be done by*, which if it were juſtly obſerv'd, would render Man's Life extreamly happy; whereas from the Breach of it flow numberleſs Calamities, as Experience may, on a juſt Reflection, ſufficiently convince us. Since therefore we have abundant Evidence, that we were not plac'd in this Life, by a Beneficent God, with a Deſign that we ſhould be Wretched, that Beneficent God muſt without Doubt, nay of Neceſſity, diſprove, and condemn thoſe Vices which are deſtructive of the Happineſs of Mankind; and approve, and favour thoſe Virtues, which promote, and confirm it. And this certain Approbation is what we ſuppoſe analogous in God to thoſe Moral Virtues in Man, which reſpect our Neighbour.

To put this yet in a fairer Light, I ſhall conſider two of them in particular, and thoſe are *Juſtice*, and *Beneficence*. Juſtice conſidered in general, conſiſts *in giving every one his due*; and is divided into *Diſtributive*, and *Vindicative*. *Diſtributive* is when we give and preſerve to every Man his Right either by Acquiſition or Poſſeſſion. If this were not Obſerv'd, if Men did not this by one another, Life were not to be endur'd. Whence it appears, that the very Neceſſity of Life leads us to *diſtributive Juſtice*. God therefore teaches us this Vertue by that Neceſſity, of which he is the Author. But we cannot ſay he has this Vertue in himſelf in the ſame Manner, as it is in us, becauſe all things are his, and therefore he can take nothing from any of his Creatures, that he was not Univerſal proprietor of before. But I ſhall ſay more of the Juſtice of God immediately, and a little further examine into its Nature, than I have yet ſeen in any Diſcourſes of this kind.

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The other Species of Juſtice is what we call *Vindicative*, which tho' it take its Riſe from particulars, is yet forbidden them on the moſt juſt, and ſolid Grounds. It conſiſts *in the Puniſhment of Offences in Proportion to their Guilt*, which ought in all Human Societies to be done and exercis'd only by the Magiſtrate. This Virtue muſt be in God becauſe he is by his own Nature the Supream Judge of Human Kind.

Since to obtain that happy Life here which the Benignity of God, who plac'd us here, deſign'd us, we ought every one to help his Neighbour, as much as we can; for whoever, by neglecting the juſt and common Duties of Life, oppoſes the *Divine Will*, is ingrateful to God, and can therefore, by his own Rule, and in his own Right expect no Favour, nor Benefit from God. But if he pertinaciouſly perſevere through the whole Courſe of his Life, in this Injuſtice, why ſhould not God, who is the Author and Guardian of Human Society, in his Juſtice prove to this Offender, by the Infliction of a painful Puniſhment on him, how odious Injuſtice is in his Sight. 'Tis certain, that we ſhould conclude the Governors of Societies and States here in the World very unjuſtly remiſs, if they ſhould always ſuffer the Diſturbers of them to eſcape their due Puniſhment.

If all Mankind ſhould do no more for one another, than juſt what the Eſtabliſh'd Laws of each Country oblige them to, their Life would be moſt unhappy. That Virtue, therefore, is call'd *Beneficence*, which teaches and prompts us to do more, than the Laws require; and this Virtue is Infinitely more Conſpicuous, and Excellent in God, than in the beſt of Men. For tho *Beneficence* is not preſcrib'd by any Civil, or Municipal Law, yet it is Commanded by the natural Conſtitution of Human Affairs, as I have ſhown, ſince without it

Life would not deſerve ſo comfortable a Name. But the Beneficence of God flows not from any Hope, and Proſpect of Advantage from us, but from the meer Voluntary Impulſe of his own moſt excellent Nature; which will not ſuffer him, not to do good to his own Creatures, or permit him to make their Evil and Unhappineſs his Aim. This *Virtue* we find in God, without the tedious Inductions of a long Argument, but by the Experience of every Day, Hour, Minute of Time and by every Breath that we draw, yet we form our Idea of it from our Knowledge of Beneficence in Man.

We arrive at the Knowledge of the reſt of the Divine Vertues by this ſame Method. We call God *Holy*, for example, becauſe he approves the Holineſs of Man, and cannot act contrary to his own Conſtitutions. For what can oblige God to a Contradiction of them? We alſo term God *Veracious*, becauſe having made Truth neceſſary to the Conſtitution of Human Society, he will not violate that Law, which he made himſelf, nor would he do that, which makes Lyers ſo odious to him. The Reaſon of Mans *Untruth*, or *Lying* is either out of Fear, Deſign, Levity, or Habit, but none of theſe Motives can reach God, he cannot therefore be other, than *Supream*, and *Unalterable Truth*.

The third Rank of our Human *Moral Virtues* reſpects God, according to my former Diviſion, all which are comprehended under the Name or Denomination of *Piety*; which is firſt plac'd in the Opinion, or Belief of a God; and next in our Veneration of him, and an outward Proof, and Teſtimony of it, proportion'd to the Excellence of that Nature, which contains the Properties of all things in himſelf, and to whom we owe all Things. But theſe Virtues conſiſting in the Duties of an

Inferiour

Inferiour to a Superiour Being, can have no Place in God, or be in him any other Way, than in his Approbation of them in Man. If we are oblig'd to honour and eſteem men in Proportion to their Virtues, Merits, and the Benefits, we receive from them, what is then our Debt to the Almighty Benefactor, and Maker? Juſtice demands of us the firſt to Man, which being fix'd, there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe that it ſhould not be highly agreeable to God to have the ſame paid to himſelf.

I might here conclude this Diſcourſe of the Attributes of God, but that I have reſerv'd a farther Conſideration of his *Holyneſs*, *Juſtice*, and *Goodneſs*, for this place, before I proceed to my Vindication of his Providence. Becauſe they are what ſome Authors have much ſpoken of, but never defin'd, nor deſcrib'd; at leaſt, as far, as I know. They have given us the Words, with magnificent Reflections but never ſufficiently explain'd the Things, at leaſt in thoſe Treatiſes, that have faln in my Way; or if they have, I think it of Importance enough to give you a View of them in this Place.

Not to amuſe, or bewilder you with Words, I ſhall define or deſcribe them in their Order, to the beſt of my Capacity, that you may by that means have a clearer Conception of Things, which by their Obſcurity too often confound the Underſtanding, and Stagger the Belief. Both which are avoided by the plain, and eaſy Explanation of the Things themſelves.

The firſt I ſpeak of is the *abſolute Holineſs* of God. Rightly therefore to Underſtand what is meant by *abſolute Holineſs*, we muſt have recourſe to the common Acceptation of the Word *Holineſs*, and we ſhall find, that we always call him a *Holy* Man, who is indu'd with a perfect Love of God,

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an uncorrupted Juſtice to his Neighbour; who ſeeks the *Unum Neceſſarium*; that is who lives up to the precepts of the *Goſpel*, which cannot be done without a true *Holineſs*. I take *Holineſs* therefore to be *the whole Circle of the Virtues compriz'd in a Word*. This therefore is the higheſt Perfection of Man, and the moſt conducive to his Happineſs both here, and hereafter; and from which Man never deviates but thro' *Ignorance*, or *Weakneſs*. Ignorance in not diſtinguiſhing between, and Weakneſs in chooſing the *appearing* Good inſtead of the *real*. It ſignifies likewiſe a ſtedfaſt Conſtancy, or Uprightneſs in the Purſuit of Virtue, a Conſiſtency, and Equality of Will, by which one is always drawn to what is good, and pleaſing to God.

Now, that this which is ſo great a Perfection in Man ſhould be in God, is plain by what I have ſaid of his other Attributes, and becauſe what we have we receive from him, but none can give what he has not himſelf, God therefore is *Holy*. But we add *abſolutely Holy*, becauſe it is without any Defect, he is always the ſame, he has no Defects of Underſtanding, or Weakneſs to biaſs him to Inconſtancy, or Inconſiſtency with himſelf.

Holineſs therefore in God is Fullneſs of all Virtues, and abſolute Exemption from all Evil, and to keep ſtill to our firſt Draught of it in the Creature, God has a perfect Love of himſelf, and an inviolable Juſtice to all his Creatures, a conſtant Conſiſtency with himſelf, and a full Poſſeſſion of all the Virtues; that is, cannot indeed be without all imaginable Perfections.

This will include his *unſpotted Purity*, which amounts to no more, than that he is abſolutely free from all manner of Fault; for the allowing him all Perfections excludes a Poſſibility of Fault.

I come next to *infinite Goodneſs*. Tho' the Word *Goodneſs* is equivocal, yet in every Senſe it Soveraignly agrees with God. The Philoſophers call all Beings *Good*, that have all Qualities neceſſary for the Performance of that Office, to which they are deſign'd by their Maker. But becauſe the wiſe Creator could not be deceiv'd in the Production of his Works, all Beings are call'd good by the Metaphyſical Philoſopher, that is; all Beings are adapted, and qualifi'd to accompliſh all the Ends of their Creation. This is the *Metaphyſical Goodneſs* and is in the Higheſt Infinite Perfection in God, becauſe that Being, who has an Infinity of Power, Wiſdom, *&c.* can want no Attribute neceſſary to the End of his Being. Now the End of the Being of God (if we may Uſe ſuch an Expreſſion) is to be Eternally Happy; but ſure no man that allows that there is a God can be ſo wild to ſuppoſe, that he that has all things in his Power, can be otherwiſe, than happy.

But this *Metaphyſical Goodneſs* is extreamly different from the *Moral Goodneſs*. The *Moral Goodneſs* conſiſts in Benignity, and Manſuetude, and belongs only to Intelligent Beings, may decay in them, nay is actually much decay'd, whereas the Metaphyſical Goodneſs cannot be ſeparated from the Creature, without the abſolute Deſtruction of its Being.

But it is the *Moral Goodneſs* of God that I ſhall here conſider, in which we find Beneficence, an eternal Bounty of Nature, which is always exerting it ſelf. And this we prove from his Works. What but infinite Goodneſs could Produce the Univerſe, and all thoſe Myriades of Beings viſible, and inviſible? God was perfectly happy in himſelf from all Eternity, and could receive no Addition, or Diminution of Beatitude from Created Beings. Before all Matter was, before all Spirits

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but Himſelf, he could have no other Motive for their Production but his *Goodneſs*, to impart various and different Portions of his inexhauſtible Source of Happineſs to each, in Proportion to the Capacity of each; as it is expreſs'd in ſome Blank Verſes of a Friend of mine in Imitation of *Milton*'s Stile. They begin from Gods framing Man, and are ſuppos'd to be Spoke by the Muſe *Urania*.

Pure was his Soul breath'd from the Mouth of God
With Good *dilated, and inform'd by* Love
Love, Wiſdom, Powr *in Minature deſign'd*
From the eternal Architype above,
The Makers Image wondrouſly expreſs'd,
Man elſe like Brutes incapable had been
Of Happineſs, the bounteous Aim of Heav'n
In making Man. For God through the vaſt Round
Of all Eternity for ever bleſt,
In his own full Beatitude compleat
From Man could no Acceſs of Bliſs derive.
Nor Man, nor Angel, nor created Being
Moſt perfect, wrought with Energy Divine,
With all the Power of the Omnific Word,
Could add the leaſt to the eternal Bliſs,
The full and perfect Happineſs of God.
For that might waſt, that could admit Encreaſe;
So by a Train of Conſeqnences cloſe
Might loſe each Part, and Portion of his Joys,
And ſo the Whole; and paſs thoſe fatal Bounds,
That Grief and Joy divide. Partition dread!
And to the Omnipotent impervious known!
Self happy O! Eternal Source of Good!
O! Goodneſs ſelf, who doſt admit no Bounds!
Active, as infinite! unweary'd ſtill
Thy wondrous Energy diffuſing wide!
In Works as Wondrous! O! moſt Sacred Power!
'Twas thy Spontaneous Goodneſs fram'd us All!

Unum,

Unnumber'd Myriades, call'd from th' Abyſs
The darkſom Womb of Nothing into Being,
Benignly deſtin'd all thy Bliſs to ſhare;
Seraph, and Cherub, and thy Image Man;
With Creatures numberleſs to Man Unknown,
Through Earth, through Air, and through thoſe Shining (Orbs,
That Show thy Glory through the vaſt expanſe.
Here paus'd the Muſe unable to expreſs
In Sounds proportion'd to a mortal Ear
The grateful Salleys of her Love divine.
The Extaſie in Sacred Silence roll'd,
Within her joyous Breaſt. Silence it ſeem'd,
Yet from her vocal Eyes enlarg'd, aſcend
Up to the Throne of God Harmonious Hymns
From all her Faculties and Pow'rs combin'd
In one Enthuſiaſtick Act of Love.
To me, to me the bleſt Infection Spreads,
And now my widen'd Soul admits the God,
His Goodneſs infinite, and taſts of Heav'n!
O! Joy tranſporting! Oh! Delight divine!
Oh! Pleaſure only worthy Human Kind!
That more than anſwers all our vaſt Deſires!
Surmounts our Hopes, and ſatisfies our Reaſon!
The Image in the Original abſorpt!

This Beneficence of God is eſſential to his Nature, nay *it is GOD*: and whatever Acts of Juſtice, or Judgment, that are attributed to God, do not agree with his eternal Principle of *Goodneſs* are falſe and impious Imputations; the Effect of Paſſion or Deſign, or Both (for they are ſeldom ſeperated) to conſecrate the Wickedneſs of Man by the Attributes of God. God cannot but be *Good*, that is *Beneficent*, becauſe his Power is infinite, and eternal, and can therefore fear no Aſſaule; he is ſecurely, and eternally poſſeſs'd of an exhauſtible Source of Bliſs, above all his Creatures, all whoſe Happi-

Happineſs, Pow'r, *&c.* are Derivatives from his, and cannot therefore provoke his Malice or Envy, which are Vices, that argue a Defect, and Impotence of obtaining what we ſee another enjoy and we want. But this can never reach God bleſſed for ever more; From whom all Happineſs comes, and who has all Happineſs in Himſelf, inſeparable from his Nature, and compleatly Perfect. Avarice in Man proceeds from fear of wanting what we part with; but God who is the Source of All can never fear a Decay, becauſe it muſt be coeternal with his Exiſtence, and can no more fail, than his own Deity. There is that Remnant of *Goodneſs* yet in Man, that if his giving did not leſſen his Store, he would beſtow on All. Shall, or can we think leſs of the *Goodneſs* of God, from whom man derives his? Can we comprehend the Endleſs, and Beneficent Emanations of infinite Goodneſs?

I now come to his *Juſtice* and *Mercy*. The latter I ſhall defer till I have diſcours'd of the Law of Nature. For *Mercy* is an exacting leſs than what legal Juſtice requires, or a total Remiſſion of the Penalty of the Breach of the Law; and to this Place I muſt alſo refer the greateſt Part of my Conſiderations of *Juſtice*, eſpecially that Part which relates to Puniſhment, which is *Punitive* or *Vindicative Juſtice* which depends on the Laws, and their Breach, *&c.* is naturally conſider'd with *Mercy*.

The *Civilians* define Juſtice to be *a conſtant and perpetual Will of giving every one his due*; and the Nature, and Extent of it will appear from the following Maxims.

(1)

That we ought to love the Greateſt Good, with the greateſt Love; the indifferent, or middle Good with a leſs or proportion'd Love to the Object; and the leaſt Good, with the leaſt Affection.

(2)

That whatever Good you would have another do to you in ſuch certain Circumſtances, that you ought to do to him in the ſame Circumſtances, if you can without Injury to any third Perſon.

(3)

The Ill, you would not have another Offer to you, you ſhould avoid Offering to another, if you can without Injury to any third Perſon.

(4)

Good not Evil ought to be return'd for Good.

(5)

'Tis Good for Man to have Sufficient to ſupport a happy Life.

(6)

And if it be good for one Man to have ſufficient to ſupport a happy Life, 'tis doubly ſo for two, trebly for three, and a Thouſandfold for a Thouſand; and ſo on.

(7)

'Tis better, that one Man ſhould not live voluptuouſly, than, that another ſhould live miſerably.

(8)

'Tis good and Juſt that every one has his due, and that the free, and quiet Poſſeſſion of it be permitted him without Hindrance, or Moleſtation.

(9) *'Tis*

(9)

'Tis evident, that any Man may ſo behave himſelf, that what was his Right by Acquiſition, or Gift, may by Right ceaſe to be his.

Out of theſe Moral Maxims we may form *Diſtributive Juſtice*, in a juſt Valuation of Things according to their Worth; in Beneficence to others by the Rule of our own Deſires, always excluding Injury to a third Perſon, for Injury, and Juſtice are Oppoſites; in avoiding Evil doings, and by taking the Meaſures of it from our own Deſires from Others: In returning Good for Good, that is in being grateful: a Regard to the Felicity of Man in his Property, and Fund of Happineſs; and to regulate it ſo, that one has not all, and the other Nothing.

For this Reaſon *Cicero* calls Juſtice the greateſt Splendour of Virtue; of which the Name, and Diſtinction of a good Man conſiſts. *Tully* alſo makes *Faith* the Foundation of Juſtice, that is, the Conſtancy, and Verity of a Mans Sayings, and Agreements.

Let us therefore from theſe Lights take a View of Gods Juſtice to Man. And in this we muſt conſider the Riſe, and the Qualities of Man; all which are deriv'd from God.

'Tis agreed on all hands, and every one in himſelf knows, that there was a Time when man in general, and each in particular was not, and by Conſequence, that God call'd them, and him out of Nothing into a Being (which we will now ſuppoſe, and hereafter prove) immortal, lyable to Pain, as well, as Pleaſure; and by Conſequence highly ſenſible of Miſery, and Happineſs. Now God drawing this Being out of Nothing without its own Conſent and Agreement (for before it was, it could

could no more give its Conſent, than ariſe out of Nothing by its own Power) and made it liable to Pleaſure, and Pain, Juſtice requir'd, that the Creator ſhould at the Production of ſuch a Creature furniſh him with certain, and undubitable Means of avoiding Pain, and obtaining Pleaſure, elſe the Being he beſtow'd had been a Curſe, and a Puniſhment without a Crime, which is inconſiſtent with either the Vindicative or Diſtributive Juſtice of God, and by Conſequence Contrary to his Nature; for, as there is a Perfect Harmony in the Divine Attributes, this muſt have contradicted them all. It was the Juſtice, the *Diſtributive Juſtice* of God, therefore, which gave Man Reaſon, and Knowledge to diſtinguiſh betwixt things offenſive, or agreeable to his Happineſs, and productive of Pain, or Pleaſure, and by Conſequence of Happineſs, or Miſery, this being only a Continuation of Pain, and that of a Continuation of Pleaſure. *Diſtributive Juſtice* therefore, is in the Deity.

Again—It is not conſiſtent with the *Diſtributive*, or *Vindicative* Juſtice of God to give Laws to this ſenſitive, intelligent, immortal Being, which his Nature is incapable of obſerving; for it would be the Height of Injuſtice to puniſh a Man becauſe he don't Flye, for which he is not made by Nature; ſo God cannot puniſh Man for the Breach of any Law which he was not capable of keeping. God, therefore, who is infinitely juſt, and neceſſarily *Good*, could make no ſuch Law; and whatever Laws there are, that are truly, and really, without the Capacity of Human Nature to keep, muſt be the Invention of Man, of deſigning Man; For *all* the Laws of God, as they are directed to the immediate Happineſs of Man, ſo are they eaſy to be obſerv'd, and obvious to

be underſtood. It is alſo inconſiſtent with the Juſtice of God to require our Belief of a *Contradiction*, or to place our eternal Happineſs, or Miſery on our belief of it. Thus the *Romaniſts* tell us, that the Belief of *Tranſubſtantiation* is Neceſſary to Salvation, when it is not intelligible in it ſelf, it contradicts all the Notices of our Senſe, and Reaſon, by which we arrive at the Knowledge of ev'n God himſelf. God has given us no way of knowing any thing but by Senſation, and Reflection, and neither of theſe can guide us to the Underſtanding of *Tranſubſtantiation*, which being a Contradiction cannot be underſtood, for it is nothing, and ſo not the Object of Knowledge, or Underſtanding, and by Conſequence not of Belief, not therefore, commanded by God, as being impoſſible for Man to believe.

Thus ſeeing that in Reaſon there are ſome Dues of Right belonging to Man, as an intelligent, and immortal Being, it is plain that God has *diſtributive Juſtice*, which may not improperly be call'd *Communicative Juſtice*, as drawn from our foregoing Maxims, but in an infinite Degree of Perfection, without Defect, Intervals or Weakneſs. And by this Conſideration of the Juſtice of God we may have a true Diſtinction betwixt the Doctrines of God, and thoſe of Men. There is a juſt Proviſion made for Mans Happineſs, a firm Conſtancy in Gods Laws, that Man may not plead Ignorance, and a Faith in his Covenants, ſince they can never be broken on his ſide. All which are ſuch Comforts to Man, that he will find no Terror in the Contemplation of God, as long, as he is juſt to himſelf. For a true Love of our ſelves is a good ſtep to the true Love of God; as a falſe Love of our ſelves, is the moſt certain Way never to arrive at a true Love of God.

Chriſto-

Chriſtophil had ſcarce done ſpeaking when they ſaw *Pleonexus* coming towards them, with a ſlow Pace and thoughtful Countenance, that witneſſed ſome Concern. Behold (ſaid *Philalethes*) yon Diſturber of our Pleaſures; for while you have been ſpeaking of the Nature of God, I have felt the moſt tranſporting Satisfaction that I ever experienc'd in my Life. Oh! *Chriſtophil*, this *Good*, this *Wiſe*, this *Omnipotent God* can he forſake us? does he not ſtill look after and direct us? For what unſpeakable Pleaſure, and Content muſt it be to think, that we are daily the care of an infinite Beneficence. O! *Chriſtophil* remove thoſe Barrs to *Providence*, which tho' they cannot deſtroy my Belief of it, from what I have already heard, yet they fill my Mind with Scruples, that I cannot fully anſwer either to my ſelf, or another.

By this time *Pleonexus* was come up to them, and being ask'd how he reſted, and what was the Occaſion of that viſible Care in his Face; He told them it was the Effect of a very lively Dream, that had often diſturb'd him that Night, which on Enquiry he own'd was of ſome Robbery done on his hidden Gold. After much Pains ſpent in arguing againſt, and ridiculing his Folly, he was perſuaded to ſit down, and hear his Arguments againſt Providence confuted.

THE Third Diſcourſe. OF PROVIDENCE.

And the Concurrence of God in the Adminiſtration of Humane Affairs, with a new and demonſtrable Vindication of that Particular.

Chriſtophil turning himſelf to *Pleonexus* and ſaid, though you have miſs'd my paſt Diſcourſe of the Nature of God; that is, the Conſideration of the ſeveral Attributes of the Deity, as far as they are certainly known to us, and as far as that Knowledge is Neceſſary to our Conduct of Life, and to eſtabliſh thoſe Laws, by which Human Society is directed to that Happineſs, which was the Aim of our Maker; and laſtly, as far as they were neceſſary to advance, and enlarge our Magnificent, and adorable Idea, and Contemplation of God.

Mr. *Hobbs* indeed in his xi Chap. of his Treatiſe of *Humane Nature* will allow us not the leaſt Knowledge of any Attribute of God except his *Exiſtence*. But as for what his Will is; what we ought

ought to do in Complaince with it, that he leaves to the Meer Invention of Man: and with good Reaſon two, ſince it was but Neceſſary for him, that was going to eradicate all the receiv'd Notions of that Law of Nature, which were built on the Acknowledgment of the known Attributes of God, and to Subſtitute a new Law of Nature, that is the Law of the Sword, ſhould deny the Foundation of the Doctrine oppoſite to his opinion. But does he give the leaſt ſhadow of a Reaſon for ſo bold, ſo ſingular and ſo impious a Poſition. No one, any more, than for ſome other new Diſcoveries of that Book, in which he lays down Poſitions without Proof, and ſuppoſes his Authority ſufficient to over balance the Reaſons of all other Logicians, as well, as moral Philoſophers. I ſhall give one Inſtance for All tho' I could give a Thouſand (for the whole Piece ſeems to me an obſcure Jumble of falſe *Logick*, and falſe *Ethicks*) under his head of *Experience*, he will needs have it, that Experience is no Guide to Certainty, ſince tho' it judge by twenty Times Succeſs, yet it may fail in the one and twentieth Time. So that all knowledge from Experience is at moſt but as a Wager of twenty to one.

But in Oppoſition to this he draws the Confirmation of all his Poſitions from one ſingle Inſtance, generally ſpeaking, and never from above two, making from that particular, a general Concluſion. As for Example, he ſays, That there is no ſuch Thing, as Colour really inherent in any Subject, and that Colour, and Light are but the Effect of Motion beating on the Eye; that Light is not in any one Body how much ſoever it appears to be luminous, but that it is a certain ſort of Modus or Manner of Percuſſion of Motion on the viſual Organ. One would expect ſome uncontеſted

Demonſtration for ſo whimſical a Paradox. but all you are like to find is an Inſtance drawn from an Obſervation which has nothing to do with the Matter. It is this, That a Blow on the Eye preſents the Image of Fire or Light, where really there is none; That is, when the Organ of the Eye is diſturb'd, and diſorder'd it does not ſee or judge of Objects, as they really are; therefore it does not diſtinguiſh Objects better when it is in order, and they in their juſt Poſition. A very Philoſophical Conſequence, and worthy the great Mr. *Hobbs*. He might have advanc'd ſome other Paradoxes, on this Bottom, as ſurpriſing as this, by arguing from the different Appearance of Things in regard of their Situation to the Eye, as when they are plac'd too far off, or two near; he might have concluded, that there was no ſuch Thing as *Round* or *Square*, becauſe the Eye viewing a Square Tower at too great a Diſtance, that is beyond the Power of the Eye to judge truly, it ſeems *round*, and that *Round*, and *Square* are only the different Pulſations of the Object on them. Many more learned, and nice Concluſions of this Nature might be drawn to confirm what he ſeems to aim at a general *Scepticiſm*; and to deſtroy all the Means of Knowledge he has not left us the Aſſurance of our Senſes, ſo that being no longer certain whether it be Day, or Night, Light or Darkneſs; whether we feel, hear, ſee, or taſt, or whether all theſe Things are fantaſtic motions of the Imagination.

Thus he has endeavour'd to rob us of all our Knowledge of God, except only this, that he *Exiſts*; that he is in his Nature (as you *Philalethes* urg'd) incomprehenſible, and by Conſequence not to be known by us at all; which I think I have evidently confuted by giving an Equal Demonſtration

monſtration of his *Attributes*, and *Will*, with that of his *Exiſtence*. For your Concluſion was juſt, if we only know, that there is a God, or Firſt Cauſe (for that is all Mr. *Hobbs* aims at in his firſt *Producer*) what is it to me whether it were *Chance*, or an Intelligent Being? nay does Mr. *Hobbs* give the leaſt Hint that he takes it for an Intelligent Cauſe, and not *Chance*; if he does, I deſire his Defenders to prove it from his Aſſertions, and Fundamentals, without at the ſame Time demonſtrating all the *Attributes* of God, of which I have now diſcours'd, for whatever contributes to prove him an intelligent Nature, will prove all the reſt; ſo inſeparable is the Proof of his *Attributes* from that of his *Exiſtence*.

But he depriv'd us of all Knowledge of God only to prepare the Way for what ſoon follows; The denying us any Knowledge of the Scriptures being the Word of God, but from the Church, which therefore ought to be the Interpreter of it to her Children, a Poſition extreamly agreeable to the Council of *Trent* I confeſs, and to the Popes Infallibility. But I Promiſe you to give other Proofs of its being the Word of God, than what Mr. *Hobbs* advances. But I ſuppoſe the Unintelligibleneſs of ſome Part of the Book, and the Novelty of others has given it a Reputation with thoſe, who cry it up, that they may be thought men of Penetration, and Diſcernment to diſcover Wonders, where others can find nothing great, or Solid.

I muſt (interrupted *Pleonexus*) anſwer you as I have heard, that Mr. *Hobbs* himſelf anſwer'd a Bookſeller, who told him that ſuch a Perſon of Learning, could not underſtand his Book, what, ſays Mr. *Hobbs* can I help that, can I encreaſe his Underſtanding.

You need not make the Application (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) I underſtand you. But that is but a poor Defence of what Argues him guilty of ſo great a Fault in writing as Obſcurity. If he wrote not to be underſtood, why did he Write at all? and ſince Men of Sence and Learning did not underſtand him, it is very plain, that he did not write with that Perſpicuity which he ought. *Cowly*'s Cenſures of *Perſeus* will be ſtronger on him, that he is not a good Author becauſe he is Obſcure. But it muſt be confeſs'd in his Juſtification that ſuch Arguments, as deſtroy the Knowledge of God, of Religion, and Nature are beſt couch'd in Obſcurity.

But I will leave him wrapt up in his beloved and palpable Darkneſs, to return again to the Light, and proceed to my proof of the Divine Providence, who as it made us, does ſtill protect and preſerve us.

Providence I, therefore, think may be very well defin'd, *The Action of God, by which he preſerves and governs all his Creatures, according to the Laws Eſtabliſh'd by himſelf.* You demand, perhaps, whether this can be prov'd by Reaſon? I anſwer— to a Demonſtration. But firſt we muſt obſerve, that the Things, on which the Providence of God is exerciſ'd are of two Kinds, ſome are deſtitute of Underſtanding, and by Conſequence of Liberty; others are both intelligent, and free. Theſe Things being of ſuch different Natures fall not under the Direction of Providence in the ſame Manner.

If we conſider Corporeal Beings, we ſhall find, that they are guided perpetually in one exact, and regular Order, conſtant, and Uniform. Whence it is certain, that they receiv'd ſuch a Nature from their Creator, which wou'd neceſſarily purſue that Order,

Order, and Courſe into which they were once put by their Almighty Maker; or that they are govern'd by ſome conſtant, and certain cauſe. Which ever you take you acknowledge the *Divine Providence*. If the firſt, you muſt confeſs, that God has been *Provident* enough over his Works, when he had given them ſo fixt a Nature, that they ſhou'd never be able to violate thoſe Laws, which he had given them in the Beginning. If you chooſe the latter, 'tis evident that they can owe their Courſe, and Conſtant Order to no other Cauſe and Director but that, which firſt produc'd them, and that is *Providence*.

As for thoſe Things, which are indu'd with *Underſtanding* and *Liberty*, tho' in the Adminiſtration, and Regiment of them Providence may ſeem a little more obſcure, yet I do not at all doubt but that I ſhall put it beyond Controverſy, without having Recourſe to the Opinions and Conceſſions of many of the *Heathen* Philoſophers, or indeed to the general Conſent of Mankind, tho' that be infinitely a better, and more ſolid Argument, for it is difficult to imagine, that all Mankind ſhou'd retain what is ſo falſe, and agree in ſpight of their different Cuſtoms, Languages, Opinions, *&c.* that God does regard, and take care of Mankind, that is, that there is a *Providence*. For this their Sacrifices, Prayers, *&c.* prove, which i they ſuppos'd, nay believ'd, not a *Providence*, they wou'd all forſake as uſeleſs.

That God, or that *Firſt Cauſe*, (which I have already demonſtrated to you to be Intelligent, Wiſe, All-powerful: that he knows, and can do all things) we find from every days Experience continues the Elements in the ſame Order, makes them uſeful to the Preſervation of our Liſe, produces the Fruits of the Earth for our Nouriſhment, purges,

purges the Air with Winds; exhales the Vapours of moiſt Places, and condenſing them into Clouds, makes the Winds give them Motion, and carry their Waters to ſcatter Fertility in thoſe Places, which Drowth elſe wou'd make for ever Barren. In ſhort our Continuance of Exiſtence, and theſe Conveniencies of Life, that we daily Experience prove a *Providence* as evidently as our original Exiſtence a God.

Again you muſt own, that to prove there is no *Providence*, you muſt ſuppoſe either a Want of Power, Knowledge or Will in God. But how can he want Power to govern what he had Power to make? Or how can he be ignorant of what he made? or how can he want Will to take care of that, the making of which was the effect of his Will? For ſince he thought us worth the making, he cannot but think us worth the regarding; he does therefore regard us, and that is *Providence*.

Cotta in *Cicero*'s *Natura Deorum* (whence I find *Pleonexus* has drawn many of his Arguments againſt *Providence*) attempts to confute the *Stoics* Arguments for *Providence* by inſtancing the peaceable Ends of wicked Men, and the unfortunate Ends of ſome good Men; without reflecting how far thoſe things are really Evil, or conſidering, that Man is a free Agent, tho' he afterwards allow it, when he ſays, that *Man owes his Virtue to himſelf, but his Fortune to the Gods*, ſince without a preſuppos'd Free Agency Man could not owe his Virtues to himſelf, for then they muſt be forc'd, and of Neceſſity, and ſo by conſequence, not in his Power to poſſeſs, or not poſſeſs, and therefore muſt be owing to ſome extrinſic Agent, which entirely confutes all, that he ſays before againſt Reaſons being a Benefit beſtow'd by the Gods, which

which he denies from the ill uſe, which Men make of it, for if Man could not make a good uſe of it, he could not owe his Virtues to himſelf, but if he could make a good Uſe of it, the Fault is not in Reaſon but in Man, and *Providence* is acquitted of his Sophiſtical Accuſations.

I do not think (interrupted *Pleonexus*) that this is a ſufficient anſwer to all, that I have urg'd againſt Providential Care of Man even in his Formation; or the Inconvenience of his Qualities, eſpecially of his Reaſon, the Source of all his Misfortunes, or his Paſſions to which he is Naturally a Slave, to ſay nothing of the reſt, which if you have forgot I will repeat.

There is no need of that (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) I have them yet freſh in my Memory, as you ſhall find by the Confutation of the whole. You, inſtead of being grateful to Heaven for the glorious Gift of *Reaſon*, complain of Nature for the Benefit, as a Grievance; becauſe ſome, nay too many make an evil Uſe of it. Yet will you find no man willing to part with this Grievance, which you make ſo Burthenſome, to become a happy ſtock, a ſtone, or at moſt a moving Machine. How then can any Man complain of a Gift, which no Man is willing to part with? But you would have a Reaſon excluſive of Vices and Tranſgreſſions; God has given you that very *Reaſon* which you Deſire, which by its Eſſence excludes all Tranſgreſſion, for you can commit no Offence againſt God, your Neighbour, or your ſelf, but what is at the ſame time, as great againſt your own Reaſon. For Reaſon demonſtrates the Excellence of Virtue, and the deſtructive Nature of Vice; it ſhows one conducive to our Happineſs, and proves the other to be its Bane in ſo plain a manner, and ſo evidently, that there

is no Man ſo weak, or blind but is capable of Seeing it.

You may as well therefore expoſtulate with Heaven for giving you Eyes; becauſe either you are Fantaſtically pleas'd not to make Uſe of them; but when to gratifie ſome extravagant Whim, or out of ſome odd Caprice, you will only go in the Dark or Blindfold; you accuſe your Eyes for leading you into Pits, and down Precipices; tho' it is not the Error of your *Eyes*, but of your *Will*, and by Conſequence no Leſſening of the Benefit, or Gift of Eyes, which if juſtly conſulted are faithful in their Information, and are of the greateſt Ornament, as well as Uſe to the Body, of all the Senſes. By thoſe the noble Variety of Objects entertain, and inſtruct the Mind, from them is the moſt copious Inlet to Knowledge; and it is the Eye, that preſents you with all the agreable Sights, that pleaſe, or tranſport you.

Muſt you, or would you daſh back the Benefit of the Eye to Heaven, becauſe they ſome times ſhow you diſagreeable Objects when your Paſſion, Folly, or Accident directs them? Is it not in your Power to ſhut out any thing, you do not like by cloſing the Lids? If you will keep them Open on painful Objects, the Fault is not in your Eye, but in the Depravity of your *Will*, which chooſes to look on what is diſguſtful to you, when it is in your Power to take a more agreeable Proſpect.

Thus Reaſon is the Eye of the Mind, 'tis that, which makes all the divine Diſcoveries of God, and Nature; the Harmony and Uſe of the Virtues; the Method and Direction of the Paſſions; the Uſe, Beauty, and Delight of Arts, and Sciences; in ſhort, all, that is great, all that is truly

ly tranſporting, laſting, and divine we owe to the Diſcovery of our Reaſon. If it ſubmit to our Paſſions, if at any time it ſide with them, it ſuffers a force from a corrupt *Will*, and is neglected, or not minded by a blind, and deaf propenſion to what is Evil.

Reaſon you ſay often ſides with our Paſſions, and juſtifies our Wickedneſs; if you take the Word Reaſon in its True Senſe, this is never true, tho' it may if you take it in general. For the Word has a double Meaning; Its true a ſoveraign Signification is RIGHT REASON, which never ſides with our Paſſions, or Juſtifies our Wickedneſs. For the Laws, and Precepts of *Right Reaſon* are known, fixt and permanent; are always the ſame, eternally true, and never joyns or takes part with Evil, or is deſtructive of our Duty to our ſelves, our Neighbour, or to God. *Right Reaſon* never allows the Paſſions to paſs the Boundaries of Juſtice, and when they do, leaves them, and proteſts againſt their Actions and Deſigns. *Reaſon* is likewiſe taken for Cauſes, or Motives, or the Occaſions for, to, or of certain Actions, Inclinations, Opinions, *&c.* This is a *Protens*, as variable, indeed, as Men, Circumſtances, and Aims. This may ſide with the Paſſions, juſtifie Vice, defend Wrong, calumniate Right, and do indeed all the ſervile Offices of predominant Affections, for it is no more, than the Language of the Paſſions, and not *Right Reaſon*, which if conſulted would deſtroy all the Excuſes of unjuſt Paſſions.

You mention a Diſtinction of *Right Reaſon*, (ſaid *Pleonexus*) which I know nothing of. Every Body pretends, that his is *Right Reaſon*, and Contrary Parties daily appeal to *Reaſon*, even in their Allegations of Authorities. If you have

any

any marks to know your *Infallible* Judge *Right Reaſon* by, amidſt all theſe pretenders, you would do well to publiſh them, that the miſtaken part of Men might know, and ſtand to him, whom now they wander after in the dark to no purpoſe, becauſe he plainly plays at Hide and Seek with them, ſo that it is a thouſand to one, whether they ever catch him.

The Task you impoſe is neither ſo difficult (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) nor ſo diſagreeable, as you imagine; and ſince it will be of Uſe to what I have hereafter to ſay, as well as to the juſtification of *Providence*, I ſhall addreſs my ſelf immediately to it.

Whatever you prove in this (interrupted *Pleonexus*) you will only remove the Difficulty from *Reaſon* to the *Paſſions*, and there it will require, as much trouble, and pains, as where it now lies.

O! (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) it will not remain there long, for as ſoon, as I have clear'd this Point of *Right Reaſon*, I ſhall ſoon drive your Complaints from the *Paſſions*, and by Conſequence from the Field of Diſpute. But firſt for *Right Reaſon*.

Right Reaſon is a true and fair Copy of that eternal Reaſon, or Law of Things originally writ in the divine Miind. The Knowledge of which Nature can only ſo far convey to us, as it ſhines out and appears from that *Right Reaſon*, which is communicated to, or rather innate in, or congenial with our Minds. And, as far, as it apparently diſcovers it ſelf, ſo far it is Obligatory on our Conſcience, as ſome divine Law writ in our very Hearts.

Right

Right Reaſon therefore being a Copy of the Divine Mind, muſt direct us to Virtue, being the Guide of our Conduct, and the Meaſure of our Aim. For the Sum and Perfection of Virtue conſiſts in this, that we conſtantly purſue that which appears the greateſt Good to *Right Reaſon*; becauſe that, which is ſo is abſolutely and ſimply the greateſt Good, as being agreeable to the *Divine Reaſon*; whoſe Precepts, and Directions flow not from a partial Byaſs to this, or that, ſprung from the blind Impulſe of an impotent Paſſion: But, as the *Common Parent* of all, preſcribes ſuch Rules, promulgates ſuch Laws, as by their very Nature conduce to the Happineſs of Human-kind. Whence by *Ariſtotle* God is call'd *The eternal Law, equally enclining to All*: And the *Stoicks*, and *Pythagoreans* uſe theſe Terms promiſcuouſly, and for one another, *viz.* to *follow God*, to *follow Nature*, and to *follow Right Reaſon*; which conſtitutes our Nature, and diſtinguiſhes Men from Brutes.

To follow therefore *Pythagoras*, and *Ariſtotle*, we muſt acknowledge, that the Meaſure of *Right Reaſon*, is the Imitation of the Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, as far as we are able; and the Way to know what theſe are, is to look back into thoſe Attributes I have explain'd of God, and theſe wonderful Works, which I have deſcrib'd, and to conſider the End and Aim of the Almighty Mind in their Production; and which will appear to be the Happineſs of the Creature. Now Happineſs conſiſts in Pleaſure; and ſure you won'd not deſire a more agreeable Conduct of your Life, and Actions, than that Law, and thoſe Precepts, which are taken by *Right Reaſon* for the promoting and continuance of our Pleaſure, which is our Happineſs.

Pleaſure

Pleaſure therefore, I allow you with your *Epicurus*, for your *Supream Good*; I confirm the Maxim by the Sanction of *Right Reaſon*: which being ſo, I only demand of you to mind, to purſue your Pleaſure and be happy; and to ſhun every thing, that may weaken, or render it unſafe. For you cannot have too ſtrict a Guard on what you naturally moſt deſire, and which alone can make Life it ſelf valuable, and this *Right Reaſon* does.

You grant (interrupted *Philalethes*) that Pleaſure is the *Supream Good*. But you do not yet define what *Pleaſure* is, nor indeed what Right Reaſon is; for I do not take your calling it *a Copy of the Divine Mind* to be a Definition.

You allow I hope (aſſum'd *Pleonexus*) that Pleaſure to be choſe by every Man, which every particular ſhall judge a Pleaſure. For ſince every man has a peculiar Palate, to force your Pleaſure on him is to offer him a pain inſtead of a Delight, and that would be to rob him of that ſupream Good, and oblige him to the contrary.

Your Difficulty (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) *Philalethes* for I defer a little firſt to touch on that of *Pleonexus*. I will therefore (purſu'd he, addreſſing himſelf to *Pleonexus*) grant you, that the *Supream Good* conſiſts in Pleaſure, nay I will ſuppoſe, that the Pleaſure muſt be agreeable to your Taſt, without inſiſting, as yet, on a juſt Right, which is that very thing, which you call Pleaſure is not ſo, or that a vitiated Taſt is not a more proper Judge of true Pleaſure, than a vitiated Palate of Good, and true Wine. A ſick Man in a Feavour thinks it a Pleaſure to drink cool, and ſmall Liquors, which even you would condemn him for, ſince the gratifying a momentary Guſt in a falſe ſatisfaction deſtroys his Life: The ſhort and preſent

ſent

ſent Gratification depriving him of all future Pleaſure and redoubling his Pain till it kills him. From this I hope you will allow a falſe and a true Pleaſure, the one in common Prudence to be Purſu'd. And the other with all our caution to be avoided; or at leaſt that there are very different degrees of Excellence in Pleaſures, and that it would be the higheſt Folly to ſacrifice a Great, and a laſting Pleaſure, to a ſmall, and ſhort one; and that it would be an Injuſtice to ones ſelf to prefer a Mean, to a Noble Pleaſure. The Buſineſs therefore is to fix ſuch a Standard of Pleaſure, as may be approv'd of by all Conſtitutions, and be admitted by every ſide. I ſhall propoſe ſuch a Standard of it, as I have Reaſon to hope you will be infinitely ſatisfy'd in, ſince I draw it from the Univerſal Principle of SELF-LOVE.

The firſt Care of *Self-Love*, is *Self-Preſervation*, for without that we can arrive at no part or portion of this Supream Good *Pleaſure*. Whatſoever, therefore is an Enemy to Self-Preſervation, is an Enemy to true Pleaſure; for by how much any thing renders our Being leſs ſecure, by ſo much it deſtroys the Means of our Obtaining, and Poſſeſſion of Pleaſure. But all thoſe Delights, that are irrational, and ſenſual without Bounds, or Reſtriction attack our ſafety, or Self-Preſervation, and in that the Fund of our Pleaſures, and ought for that Reaſon to be avoided meerly out of a Principle of *Self-Love*, which you pretend to purſue, in the Chace of your Particular Inclinations. And even you your ſelf muſt think him a very ill Husband in Pleaſure, who prefers a Minutes delightful Deſtruction, to an Age of Happy Security; ſince that is paying too dear for Pleaſure. Whatever little, or particular Satisfaction is deſtructive of the ſafety, and continuance of Pleaſure

in general, must even by the most voluptuous be rejected on the very Principle of *Self Love*.

There is nothing more evident, than that Mankind cannot Subsist singly, and without a Dependance on one another. For God, or Nature has given to no One Man Force, Skill, or Power enough to combate all the rest of his Kind. And since *Peter* may pretend to the pursuing the Pleasure most agreeable to himself, without any Regard to *John*, as well as *John* to pursue a Pleasure most agreeable to himself without Regard to *Peter*, be that plac'd in Women, Money, Power, or any thing else, it may so happen that the Pleasures of *John* and *Peter* meet in the same individual Object, and how then will you determine the Point? will you allow either the Invasion of the others Pleasure? If you deny either you rob him of his Right of following his own peculiar Pleasure. If you allow the Liberty to Both, you destroy the Pleasure of Both, in incroaching on the Right, which each claims in the Pleasure he Particularly fancies. Or will you put them to the Combate for the entire Possession of the Object, without a Rival? This puts the Security of both in Hazard, and certainly destroys one. But what Right has corporal strength to deny me my Inclinations, when you will allow Reason none? But if this confusion, and inconvenience proceed from two Mens centring their Pleasures in the same Object, what must we expect from that of many but a Loss of Security, and by consequence must have but a faint prospect of a very frail, and precarious Pleasure?

This must be the Event of pursuing arbitrary, and sensual Pleasures without any Restriction, by which you rob your darling Pleasure of Security and so invade the first Principle of Self-Love *Self-Preservation*. There is therefore a Necessity, if you will enjoy any Pleasure at all, that you remove this

this Difficulty, and render your Enjoyments Secure, of which there is no Means, but by judging them by the infallible Rule of *Right Reason*, explain'd in common Justice, and the Moral Law. Which Brings me, *Philalethes*, to your Objection, which is of the more force, because there are Men, who have totally loſt all ſence of *God*, and divine things; and who acknowledge no certain, and unalterable Dominion in the Faculties of the Mind, but contend, that they are to obey the Sway of any Paſſion, that has uſurp'd the Heart, and that they muſt blindly fulfill all its Deſires, even to its own Deſtruction, affirming that in this conſiſts the the ſupream Happineſs of Humane Life. With theſe Men I confeſs I muſt deal in another Manner, and not draw *Right Reaſon* from that Divine Part of the Soul, that is directed immediately to Good, but from the Underſtanding.

I therefore define *Right Reaſon* to be *Evident Deductions drawn from evident Principles.* By evident Principles, I mean ſuch Grounds, or Poſtulata, to which you cannot on the firſt hearing Deny your Aſſent without Cavelling. By evident Deductions I mean ſuch Conſequences as flow from thoſe Principles, which you cannot deny without denying the Principles.

It is not my Buſineſs here to take notice of all the Principles, and Conſequences of this Nature, but only of thoſe, which relate to our preſent Subject, which is the Happineſs of Mankind, that is in the Virtues, and Vices, that produce or obſtruct it.

I have already prov'd, that God has made Mankind with a Beneficent Intent, that is with a Deſign, that he ſhould be Happy. It follows, therefore, that he has given them a certain Knowledge, of what is conducive, or injurious to that End, and furniſh'd them with Power to chooſe one, and reject the other.

To prove the first I shall lay down some Maxims, or Moral Principles, and then see the Deductions that may be made from them. To prove the other, I shall refer you to my Proof of the free *Agency* of the Mind, in which the Justification of Providence very much consists.

The Principles, that I shall lay down, are immediately true, and need no farther Proof, than the hearing of them, but into which all moral Reason is perspicuously and easily resolv'd. You need not be apprehensive of any severity in them, for they are extreamly sweet, and pleasant, since they propose Nothing but what is very grateful, and agreeable to the Receiver.

(1)

That is a Good *which is grateful, pleasant, and agreeable, to any perceptive Life, or to any Degree, or Station of that Life, and consistent with the Preservation of the Receiver.*

(2)

But whatever is ungrateful, unpleasant, and disagreeable to any Perceptive Life, or any Degree or Station of it, is an Evil, *and if the distruction of the Receiver be joyn'd to it, it is the greatest* Evil. For example, whatever is not only offensive to the Eye, and Ear, but also productive of Blindness, and Deafness is the greatest *Evil*. But it wou'd be an Evil if it only weaken'd either, or both those Senses. The same Reason holds of all the other Faculties.

(3)

There are some Species, or Degrees of Perceptive Lives, among the Variety of them, which is form'd in the Universe, more excellent, and of greater Value and Worth, than others.

(4)

One Good may be greater than another, either by Nature, Duration, or Both. This is self evident: But it

it may be illuſtrated by this Inconvenience, which wou'd elſe follow, That elſe one Life wou'd not be more Excellent than another, nor one Happineſs greater than another, and by that Rule, God, Angels, Man, a Horſe, or the vileſt Worm wou'd have the ſame Degrees of Bliſs, which ſure none but a Madman can allow. But there can't ariſe the leaſt Doubt, or Diſpute, as to Duration.

(5)

A Good *is to be embrac'd, an* Evil *avoided; but the more excellent* Good *is to be choſen before the leſs excellent, and the leſs Evil to be endur'd to eſcape the greater.*

(6)

In a Thing we have not experienc'd our ſelves, we ought to believe thoſe, who aſſure us, that they have experienc'd it, provided their Lives anſwer their Profeſſions, and there be no Reaſons to ſuſpect any Fraud, or Worldly Intereſt in the matter.

(7)

We ought to chooſe rather the Abſcence of a real Good, than the Preſence of a real Evil, of equal Degree in Weight, and Duration; and the Abſcence of the Good is ſo much the more eligible, by how much the Evil exceeds the Good in Weight and Duration.

(8)

We ought to have a preſent Regard to what will certainly come to paſs, ſince it will once be preſent, tho' now in the Future. There holds a proportionable Conſideration of what may only probably happen.

(9)

The Value of the leſs Good is to be meaſur'd by the greater, as to its Weight, and Duration.

(10)

A preſent Good is to be ſurrender'd, or diminiſh'd for a probable Expectation of a future Good, infinitely greater

than the Present in Weight, and Duration, much more for a certain Expectation.

(11)

We ought to bear the present Evil to avoid a future Evil infinitely greater in Weight, and Duration, that may probably come on us, and therefore much more for the avoiding an Evil, that will certainly come.

(12)

The Mind judges more rightly of Things when free from the Prejudice of Passions, than when it is disturb'd by the Passions, and any corporeal Impressions.

On these Principles, Prudence, Fortitude, and Temperance are founded; which Virtues respect immediately our selves, and without which we can have no sincere Pleasure, or secure, and certain Happiness. Those, that follow, regard our Duty to Others, and fortify, and strengthen that Felicity the former produce, being the Foundation of Sincerity, Justice, Gratitude, Compassion, or Pity, and Piety. But not to repeat what I have said already, I must put you in mind that most of them I have given you in my Discourse of Justice, and which contain all our Duty to our Neighbour, and are necessary therefore to our own Happiness, because no Particular can be Happy by the Injury of the common and publick Safety, and Felicity. What I now add, regard our Duty to God the Band of all the other, and that to the Magistrate.

(13)

'Tis good to obey the Magistrate in indifferent Things, even without the Fear of Punishment.

(14)

'Tis better to obey God, than Man, or our own Concupiſcence, or ſenſual Deſires.

Theſe, and ſuch like, are the Moral Principles on which are built the Duties of Natural Religion, as they are on *Right Reaſon.* They are likewiſe ſo ſelf-evident, and clear, that at the very firſt hearing they are found to be true, by any Man of tollerable Capacity, and who is not byaſs'd by Prejudice, and that without the long Train of Arguments to confirm them. By this means I have given you an Anſwer to your Queſtion *Philalethes* of what I meant by Right Reaſon. For you now find, that it is that which is reſolv'd by certain, and neceſſary Conſequences into ſome intelectual Principle, that is immediately true: And to remove all Queries, and Demands of Examples of ſuch Moral Principles, thoſe that I have mention'd are ſufficient.

Thus I hope I have vindicated *Providence* in his Godlike Gift of *Reaſon*, and given you Marks evident enough of what I call *Right Reaſon*; and by it ſhown how great a Benefit it is to Mankind, when followed and obey'd; and that therefore you are ſo far from having the leaſt ſhadow of a Pretence ingratefully to accuſe Heav'n for the Gift, that you ought to bleſs the infinite Goodneſs, and return daily Thanks for ſuch eminent Marks of his Favour, as a Faculty which infallibly leads you through his delightful Wonders to himſelf; and thence teaches you thoſe admirable Truths and plainly divine Rules, which are the Meaſure of our Conduct to Happineſs, directing us even by a Principle of *Self-love* to the Choice of Virtue, and the Rejection of Vice, while he has given you Reaſon to judge of Virtue, and Vice by ſuch

Principles, as are absolutely, and immediately true, and evident.

Thus I have shown you, that *Right Reason* is never of the Party of Evil, nor ever indulges the Passions beyond their just Bounds. That it is a certain Rule for your Judgment of your Pleasure, as your *Supream Good*, and your Medium of distinction betwixt the *animal*, and *intellectual* Appetite; plainly showing that the Indulgence of the first is destructive of the Later, the Security of your Pleasure, and *Self-Preservation* the first Principle of Self-Love. For whoever loves himself must be Virtuous even for his own sake.

This leads me to your other Objection, when you said, that if I remov'd the Variety, and Inconstancy, nay Inconsistency from *Reason*, I should fix it in the Passions; Whose Power being so great, as to produce all those Evils, laid to the Charge of *Reason*, it is the same Thing in Effect, to which Principle in our selves, we owe our Misery, if to one of them, which is fix'd in our Nature by Heav'n, that made us. But by a short View of the *Passions*, and their Usefulness, I shall evidently show, that they are Benefits worthy of a Wise, and Good God to bestow; and that contrary to your Assertion, and the *Stoics* Notions, the Passions are all in their own Nature *Good*; and that the End, and Aim of divine Providence, is not less apparent in their Use, than in the Structure of the Organs of any Animal, which will furnish you with those confirmatory Considerations, of the Wisdom, and Existence of God, which I told you, you would find in the View of the Human Soul, or Mind.

The general Consideration of them will give us some sort of Idea of their Utility. The Passions being joyn'd to a vehement Agitation of the Spi-

rits,

pits, seem to perform in the lesser World Man, the Office which the Wind does in the greater. For, as the Wind Purges the Air; so do the Passions stir the Blood, preventing by their Emotions a Stagnation, and Putrifaction of it.

They farther bring into the Mind various Theatres, and Stages, as I may say, and on them presens to it variety of Images, which, tho, they endeavour to bribe, and tempt the Judgment, yet do in Reality, furnish it with a greater Experience, and give us that wonderful pleasure to find, in all these Tempests, the various, and strong Insults and Witcheries of the invading Phantasms, or Images, that there is something divine in us, which we call the *Mind*, and which constantly preserves the same Sense, and Judgments through all the successive Commotions, not suffering it self to be won by the most importunate Temptations of the Passions, but absolutely, and entirely perseveres in its adhesion to that, which is simply the best, or the greatest Good.

From this Conflict and Victory we farther discover a kind of Empire, or Kingdom in our Soul, and that the Intellectual Part has other depending Parts, over which it Presides, which it Governs, Instructs, and directs, as a Father does a Child. So, that our Mind is not so Solitary a Thing, as some may imagine, but has a Train of Attendants numerous enough, and does not extend its Jurisdiction over its own Passions only, but ev'n to the very *Spirit of Nature*, in the corporeal Impressions, whose Incantations and Charms it can stop, and extinguish by the Power and support of a more divine sort of Magick.

From a nice Enquiry into the Passions, their Order, Situation, and Nature, we shall find, that they make our Life, and Sense fuller, and more

quick

quick, and lively; For, as *Plato* says the Passions are the Wings of the Mind.

Descartes asserts, that the Passions are the most certain and solid Treasure of the Mind. For since in many other Perceptions we may be deceiv'd, and that we cannot be certain, that what they represent is in reality what they show it to be, there is no Room no Way, nor any Means of being deceiv'd in those of the Passions. For they are so near, and so much in the very Soul, that it is impossible, that it should feel them, and at the same Time doubt whether they are in reality or no, as long as it feels them. Hence proceeds that wonderful Peace, and Tranquility of Mind, permanent Pleasure and Sweetness, that is never mix'd with the Alloy of Repentance, which arises out of a Sense, and Consciousness of Virtue, which does not only exceed all those poor, and imprudent delights, which by Nature bring with them on the Mind Disgust, Repentance, and Loathing; but ev'n all the opinions, and speculations of Philosophers, because (besides other Matters) they do not exclude our Doubts, but the uneasiness of Doubt is absolutely remov'd, when we feel, and are sensible of a Passion.

In fine, besides that common use of almost all the Passions, *viz.* Their more firmly fixing, and almost engraving in the Mind the Images of the Objects, there is another, that is by no means contemptible, which is that we can by the Passions judge in our selves how far, and how great an Esteem we have for those things which are truely *Good*, and *Honest*; and how truely, and as it were vitally our Mind is united to them. For tho we may be mightily eloquent in the Praise of Virtue, and the Love of what is Good, and Honest, yet the Mind cannot joyn it self intirely to them, or certainly know when it is join'd to 'em, but by the constant me-

thod

thod of Life, which muſt diſcover an equal Antipathy to what is Evil, or diſhoneſt either in our ſelves or in any third Perſon, all which cannot be done, without the Paſſions, which are the inmoſt, and the moſt immediate Fruit of Life. It is the moſt perfect ſtate of Life to love *Good*, and hate *Evil*, whenever it appears in our ſelves, as well, as others, for this is a Proof, that the Inferior Part of the Soul is ſubdu'd to a Conſent and Agreement with the Superiour, and that to the whole Man like *Elias* is bearn up to Heav'n, and God in the fiery Chariot of the Paſſions.

The *Paſſions* therefore are in themſelve *good*, and and the greateſt, and laſt compleating or Perfection of the Humane Life; if you obſerve but theſe two Laws. The firſt is, that they be directed to their juſt Objects (which is ſtil'd the right or juſt Impulſe of the Paſſions) and thoſe who ſin againſt this are the moſt guilty Criminals that are. Such are the Envious, and the Cruel, who delight in ſavage, and bloody Objects, and the reſt of that ſort of Men.

The other Law is that the *Paſſion* be proportion'd to the Object, and Aim: That is (according to one of our foregoing Maxims) that we are touch'd with a greater Paſſion for thoſe Things, that are the beſt and greateſt, with moderate Paſſion for thoſe, which are of a moderate Degree of Goodneſs or Greatneſs, and that we affect thoſe, which are of the leaſt Conſideration in theſe two Qualities, with the leaſt Paſſion, and Inclination. But that we never give way ſo far to the Agitation of our Affections, that their Violence, do either diminiſh, or extinguiſh the Light of Reaſon ſo far, as to diſable us to obtain or reach that End, which Nature aims at in every Paſſion, which ſhe has given our Souls. And *this is call'd the Moderate Impulſe of the Paſſions.*

But

But to ſet theſe in their true Light, and to demonſtrate yet more plainly how little Reaſon you have to complain of Providence for his Gift of the Paſſions, I will run over the Heads of moſt of the Paſſions of the Mind, and ſhow, that they are all ſubject to the ſame Rule, and wiſely deſign'd by the Author of our Nature for our Service and Happineſs,

I ſhall begin with *Admiration*, the Uſe of which is evident, ſince it plainly contributes to the imprinting in the Memory, with the greater Force and Efficacy, the Obſervations of new Things, that by this Means the Mind being furniſh'd with a ſufficient Store, it may arrive at the Knowledge of the moſt uſeful Truths.

Nature by giving the Paſſions of *Eſteem*, and *Deſpiſing* informs us, that every thing is not of equal Value with us; that if there be a *Better* and a *Worſe*, there muſt certainly be a *Beſt*, which we ought to aſpire to ev'n by the Light of Nature.

The *Eſteem of our ſelf* is a Paſſion compounded of *Admiration*, *Joy*, and *Love of our own condition*; but a *Deſpiſing of our ſelf* proceeds from *Admiration*, *Grief*, and *Self-Love* join'd with a *Hatred of our own Defects*. From both theſe Paſſions we learn, that all men ſhould be of ſome Conſideration, and above all Injury and Contempt. For when we eaſily perſuade our ſelves to believe we are of ſome Conſideration our ſelves, and yet, that there is not ſo great a Difference betwixt us and other Men, but that we ſhould think, we ought to eſteem others alſo, and ſhow a Humanity, and Friendſhip to them. Nature therefore by theſe Paſſions teaches Humanity, and Civility of Manners, and Dilligence and Induſtry to obtain thoſe Things, which have moſt intrinſic Value.

But to run throug all the Derivatives of this and the other Primitive Paſſions would take up too much

much time. I shall therefore leave to your Imagination the Advantages of those which spring from *Love*, *Hatred*, *Joy*, *Grief*, and *Desire*. If *Desire* sufficiently expres's'd what the *Latin* Moralists term *Cupiditas*, and only touch on those Sources, and Fountains of the Rest, of which they are compounded and mix'd, and must by consequence bring proportionable Benefits to the Humane Nature.

The Use of the following five primitive Passions, *Love*, *Hatred*, *Joy*, *Grief*, and *Desire* is most manifestly clear, and the two first always end in the fifth. For every thing, that is grateful to us excites *Joy* or Pleasure; the Pleasure begets a *Love* of that which gives the Pleasure; and *Love* generates a *Desire* or Coveting of either encreasing, continuing, or sometimes of repeating the same Pleasure. On the other Hand every thing, that is ungrateful to us, produces *Grief*, or *Sorrow*, *Grief* begets a Hatred of the Cause of the *Grief*, and *Hatred* a *Desire* of removing your self from that Cause; and in these alone almost consist the Safety, and Preservation of all Animals. And what is worthy our Observation is, that those very Passions, which are most disagreeable to us, contribute no less to this, than the other. I mean *Grief* and *Hatred*, because this Life is, as much destroy'd by the Presence of *Evil*, as the Absence of *Good*.

Nay, what is more extraordinary, Nature seems to have taken more Care, and to have been more sollicitous in our defence against *Evil*, than in her Provision for our Enjoyment of Pleasure; As we may observe in that most efficacious Eloquence, which Nature has bestow'd on most Animals to move Compassion, and implore Help, when they are oppres's'd, with *Grief* or *Pain*, such is that planitive, and mournful Tone of Voice, which they utter, that Sorrowful dejection of the Eye, and Countenance; that Howling, Sighs, Tears, Groans, and the Rest

of

of the dismal Equipage of Grief, which have certainly a very considerable Force to touch the Mind with Pity, and Compassion, and so to move us the more readily to give our Help, and Assistance, or the more Speedily to put a *Stop* to, or cease from the Injury we have begun.

Neither, on the other side, is Nature at all deficient in her Care and Provision for our perception of Pleasure. For the Eye and the Countenance present a more Pleasing Motion, and more agreeable, and delightful Air to the Beholder, when we are agitated with the Emotions of Joy. Which Effect of that Passion, Nature design'd, as Allurements and inviting Charms to win, and polish us to a necessary Urbanity, and Civility; and to give us mutual Studies and endeavours to *Please*. Thus has she given us those foregoing Effects of Grief to deter us from offering Injuries to those, who do not deserve it; and to goad us on to a timely, and speedy relief of the Miserable and Unfortunate.

From *Love*, and *Hatred*, *Grief* and *Joy* we therefore learn to procure, as much as we can, what is good for our Selves, and others; that we hurt none; but that we defend, on the Contrary, both our selves, and others, as much as lies in our Power, from Evil.

Desire gives an Edge to our Dilligence for it is the most busy, and active of the Passions; because by the Heart deriving a more violent Agitation from it, than from any other Passion, it supplies the Brain with more Spirits, which rebounding on the Members of the Body render it more Active and more lively; and accustoms the Mind to a very agreeable Emotion, and Alacrity; which would without them, by the Defect of the Object that excites them fade, grow sluggish, and die.

But to have this *Desire* happy and successful, we must take a peculiar Care not to suffer it to be levell'd at Objects, that are not in our Power; nor

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yet to let them be born to those which are, with a greater, or more vehement Impetuosity, than our frail and mortal Body can bear. For to Covet, or *Desire* that, which is simply in our *Power*, with an Impatience, and Eagerness that grasps at it sooner, than our Faculties and Force can obtain it, is the same thing, as to direct it to an Object, that is absolutely out of our *Power* ever to obtain at all. And this mad Desire wou'd rather affect us with *Pain*, and Anxiety, than Alacrity, and Action.

What is the Use, and Effect of Love? It is not the *Propagator* of Mankind? Does it not unite Families, and Nations? In short, where it is bounded by Reason and Justice? are we able to sum up all the Good, and Benefit mankind derive from it, for their *Pleasure* and Happiness?

From what has been said you may find that the *Passions* are in themselves *all Good*: And if those Rules I have laid down be justly observ'd, extreamly conducive to our *Pleasure*, that is, Happiness, or *Supream Good*. It is the Abuse of them, and the neglect of those Laws; a blind Faith in the Corporeal Impressions, without bringing them to the severe and just Tribunal of the Judgment that has made the *Passions* produce so many ill Effects. From this source flow all those deviations, and wandrings from Reason, which produc'd all the Miseries of Mankind, till *Right Reason* was entirely banish'd from their Practice, as well as Principles; from which we never cou'd have been recall'd, or restor'd again to the Guidance of *Right Reason*, but by that very inexhaustible Goodness, which gave Being to the World, and to Mankind, by sending into the Flesh his beloved first begotten, by his Miracles, and by his Death to Redeem us from a Tyranny so shameful, and so destructive of our Happiness, as I shall prove when I can to the Testimonies of the Christian Religion.

But what has been said on this Head, you, *Philalethes*,

Lalethes, will find your Doubt resolv'd, by which you suppos'd, that God had given you Passions, that requir'd one thing, and Laws that commanded the contrary. Yet if you think that insufficient, I will come closer to your very words.

I suppose after what I have said of the *Passions*, you will both freely own, that without the *Passions* Man can have no Pleasure, and that without Pleasure, there can be no Happiness. The *Stoicks* finding the Pains and Inconveniencies, that arose to Humane Life by the common Indulgence of the Passions contrary to the dictates of Right Reason, prescrib'd Rules for this Evil, by which they wou'd deprive Man of what is essential to his Nature, and Happiness. For they aim'd at rooting out the *Passions* entirely, and to render Man as insensible of Pain or Pleasure, as if he were a stock or a stone. In short, they wou'd have Man put off his Nature, and be what his Creator never meant him, but as the Task was impossible, so none of them ever reduc'd their *Precepts* to *Practice*. But how much more excellent is the Doctrine of the *Gospel*, which only prescribes just Rules for the Regulation of them.

I have already shewn you, that all the *Passions* are *Good* in their Nature, and design'd for our Benefit. But as God has given us the Passions for our Pleasure, and the Happiness of Life, so he has furnish'd us with Reason to Judge how far they are to be Indulg'd, without incurring Pain: Now they never transgress the Bounds of Moderation, and Justice, but Pain ensues, which both Reason and Self-Love tell us we shou'd avoid. Nay the just, and moderate use of the Passions hightens the Pleasure, that proceed from them, while he that gives them no Limits feels but a weak, tastless, and insipid satisfaction in his exorbitant Enjoyments. So that if you will show me any particular in which the Law of God

God bounds the Paſſions, and I'll undertake to demonſtrate that Reaſon at the ſame time confirms it, and threatens Pain and Trouble in the paſſing theſe Boundaries fix'd by the Law, of which you complain. Now that Law muſt be highly Juſt, which every Man juſtifies as ſoon as he Conſults his own Reaſon. And a Man has no Cauſe to complain of a Precept, which only heightens his Pleaſure. For a Rational Epicure (if we can ſuppoſe ſuch a Contradictory Being) while he attributes Order, in his own, and the World's Exiſtence, to Chance, and ſuppoſes his careleſs little Gods unwilling and incapable of taking Cognizance of his Actions, wou'd yet Preſcribe himſelf the ſame Bounds of his Paſſions, meerly for the ſake of his own Happineſs. For when our Paſſions prompt us to any thing that is Unjuſt, Invaſive of our Neighbours Property, or Injurious to his Happineſs, or deſtructive of our own Health, Peace, Abilities, *&c.* And *Reaſon* tells us, that the neceſſary Conſtitution of Humane Society, threatens, and will Pay it with Troubles too great for the Pleaſure we propoſe: And that this muſt be, or Humane Society could not be Preſerv'd; and that the Preſervation of that, in all its Rights, is the Intereſt of every Man in it; ſince to that he owes his own Security, and by conſequence, his Pleaſure, and his Happineſs. For without Security, there can be no Happineſs, which is a Continuity of Pleaſures; and a ſhort and tranſitory Delight, which deſtroys this, is ſo fooliſh, that every Rational Man muſt Condemn it, as much as the Laws of God.

The Laws of all Nations aim at the ſame End of confining the Paſſions to certain Bounds, which to Tranſgreſs, is to Incur Pain, or the Immediate Penalty of the Law. Thus private Revenge, that affects our Property, or our Life, is Puniſh'd by the Laws of all Nations. Thus Theft, Rapine, and the like, the Wiſdom of every People have agreed to Baniſh by Univerſal Conſent, as Injurious to their Peace and Happineſs; the ſame they have done with Promiſcuous Conjunctions; for there is no Nation, tho' never ſo Indulgent in this Particular, but has ſet ſome Bounds or other to them, ſome more Extenſive, and ſome more Confin'd. All theſe ſecure the Wife, or Wives to the Husband, with Severe Penalties, on the Invaders of the Mariage Bed. Thus Mens Daughters are the Right and Property of the Fathers, till Maried, and moſt Nations Puniſh the Corrupters of them ſeverely.

Since therefore, 'tis evident, that the neceſſity of Humane Society has Inſtructed every Nation to make Laws for Circumſcribing the Paſſions, it highly Juſtifies the Principles of the Chriſtian Religion, which, as they are the moſt Perfect and Equitable, aim directly at the End of Providence in the Creation of Mankind, *Secure Happineſs*. This will appear if poſſible, yet more plain, when I come to conſider more fully of the Law of Nature.

I come now to your laſt Aſſault on Providence, the Confuſion of Humane Affairs, which, becauſe it ſeems the moſt plauſible Argument, I ſhall be the more Particular in my Anſwer; eſpecially, becauſe I have not met with ſo reaſonable a Solution of it, as I think I have to offer. You

You ſuppoſe therefore, that the Affairs of Humane-kind are perfectly the Effect of *Chance*, becauſe you can diſcover no Rule, or Rational Conduct of them; and from hence you draw a Conſequence, that we may as well ſuppoſe the World Made, as Govern'd by *Chance*.

But, as I have Prov'd, that it was not made by *Chance*, ſo I believe I ſhall, with equal Evidence, convince you, that *Chance* has no Hand in its Government. As to the firſt, can you, or can any Man of Common-Sence (as I have obſerv'd) take a View of this World, and not from its Exiſtence own a Wiſe and Omnipotent Creator of it? Will not the Conſideration of even your own Being, lead you to the ſame Cauſe of your Exiſtence? The Order, and Oeconomy of both deny a Fortuitous Original. For *Chance* can never produce Order, and Diſpoſition of Parts, which cou'd proceed from nothing but Deſign, and the Deſign of *Perfect Knowledge*.

This Cauſe therefore, that is ſo Evidently Wiſe, Good, and Potent in the Formation of his Works, cou'd want neither Will, Power, nor Knowledge, to give the Affairs of Mankind, as Beautiful an Order, and Aſpect, as thoſe of the Inanimate Creation: And He has certainly done it, tho' the generality of Men want either Capacity, or Thought enough to diſcover it. But admitting the contrary, and confeſſing, that the Confuſion of Humane Affairs is too Apparent and Intricate to be diſ-entangled by every Conſiderer; and that Virtue and Juſtice often loſe their Cauſe, while Vice Triumphs; I believe it far from a Reproach to Providence, or a Proof of

the Government of Mankind being without his Eye and Direction. As I ſhall immediately ſhew.

'Tis no leſſening to the Power of God, to ſay, That he cannot do Contradictions, but a Confirmation of it; for, cou'd that be ſuppos'd, it wou'd deſtroy all Certainty, and by Conſequence, the Knowledge and Proof of his own Eternal, and Omnipotent Exiſtence. Contradictions are no more the Objects of *Power*, than *Knowledge*, and when, therefore, we ſay, God is Omnipotent, we mean that he can do all things, that are Poſſible. And tho' the *Romaniſts* are ſo very fond of this Childiſh, tho' Specious Argument of God's Omnipotence, for *Tranſubſtantiation*, yet will they never be able to make it out, that God can make the very ſame Individual Thing to Exiſt, and not Exiſt, at the very ſame Numerical Moment. Thus likewiſe, God cannot make Man to be abſolutely Confin'd, and yet Free; it is a Contradiction, and cannot poſſibly be true, and cannot therefore be done by God.

Thus it being Evident (from what I have ſaid of the Divine Nature, and what I have to ſay on the Freedom of the Mind) that it has Pleas'd the Infinite Goodneſs, Power, and Wiſdom to form the Humane Mind in his own Image, and Likeneſs, he cou'd not preſerve that Likeneſs, without giving it a *Freedom of Agency*, proportion'd to the Faculties and Capacity of its Nature. By Likeneſs, I mean, that he gave our Mind certain Qualities, that bore ſome Analogy to his Divine Attributes (as appears from my paſt Conſideration of the apparent Properties of the Deity.) which we diſcover by paſſing from the Effect to the Cauſe; for the Effect can have no

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Quality, but what the Cauſe beſtows, and none gives what he has not himſelf. Now, if Man had not a *Freedom of Agency*, he muſt of Neceſſity have been a Machine, a Puppet, Incapable of *Pain* or *Pleaſure*, Reward or Puniſhment, all his Actions being of Neceſſity, not of Choice. Or, which is all one, it had not conſiſted with the Goodneſs and Juſtice of God, to have made him liable to Pain, without giving him Power and Knowledge to avoid it; but nothing is ſo Evident as our Liableneſs to Pain, it neceſſarily follows then, that we have a Power to avoid it, which Conſtitutes part of our *Free Agency*.

But this is like Arguing to prove Motion; 'tis equally Evident from every Man's Self-conſciouſneſs, each Man Experiences this Liberty in himſelf, and therefore it needs no Forreign Proofs to Confirm it. Since therefore, it is Evident, that every Man is a Free Agent, it unavoidably follows, that the vaſt Multitude of Actions which proceed from ſuch a Numberleſs Multitude of Free Agents, muſt appear ſo Confus'd, and Irregular, as to puzzle an ordinary Beholder.

The Conduct of his Life is committed to every Man's own Judgment by the Charter of Free Agency; and while every Man drives on the particular Dictates of his own private *Will*, too often guided by Paſſion, and too ſeldom by *Right Reaſon*, it would be more, than a Miracle, if there were not an Inextricable Confuſion, without any Reflection at all on Providence, as being the Natural and Neceſſary Reſult of our Being. Yet, from hence, from this Buſtle of Private Deſigns, this Hurly-burly of Oppoſite Aims, and Intereſts, Providence produces one common Intereſt, and a

most Beautiful Order of Government; the various Oeconomies of Humane Societies, much more wonderful, and more amazing, than that of the Planets, because the Beings directed by this, are vastly more Numerous, and at the same time Free Agents, which tho' disorder'd, and irregular in Particulars, yet Compose Order and Harmony in the whole. Thus, tho' there cannot be greater Discord, than that in the Elementary World; than the Natural Enmity betwixt Fire and Water, Earth and Air, yet Providence draws the greatest Concord out of them in the whole. In like manner, tho' the Natural jarring Interests of Mankind be great, yet is the Concord of the whole for the common Preservation, as admirable and noble.

But it is not only this Order and Oeconomy of the World, that is drawn hence by Providence, but from this Confusion of the Designs of each Free Agent, the Omnipotent Wisdom produces those Providential Events, which we, too often, attribute to Fortune; when we ought to refer them to the Immediate Finger of God.

As for the accidental and particular Pieces of Injustice that are done to Particulars, they are to be a little more nicely Consider'd, than they are by the generality of Mankind, before we Pronounce against Providence, where it is entirely Justifiable.

There are a great many things to be consider'd before we can decide this Question. 1. We must know the Cause perfectly well, else we cannot determine in its Favour, or against it, as Just or Unjust. 2. Next we must judge of the Justice of the Cause, not from Party-Opinions, but from Right Reason; else the very same things

things would be Juſt, and Unjuſt at the very ſame time, for one Party complains of Providence for its Sufferings, while the other Extols and Praiſes the Juſtice of Providence in their Puniſhment, and Miſery. This is Evident in Publick Factions.

In Private and Particular Cauſes, we muſt be oblig'd to be entirely Matter of the Cauſe; that is, we muſt have heard both Parties, and muſt, our ſelves, have a Capacity to Comprehend and Judge of that Cauſe, when heard, without Biaſs or Affection, but with blind, impartial Juſtice, and when we have done this, we may then ſay whether the *Right* or the *Wrong* get the better. But how few are there thus qualify'd to Judge, and how few Judgments are made of Humane Affairs, with this Candour, and by this Method? But we build on Report, and judge by Humour and Paſſion, and therefore for the moſt part Erroneouſly.

3. Next we are to conſider Virtue a little more nicely than we do in theſe general Sentences. A great many Men run away with the Appearance, and give that glorious Name to ſuch as have no ſolid Claim to it, and ſo while Providence Puniſhes the *Hypocrite*, we Condemn it, for ſuffering the *Juſt*, and *Virtuous* to be Oppreſs'd.

4. We ſhou'd likewiſe conſider, that to find a Man truly Juſt and Virtuous, is no eaſie matter; that is, a Man, who is in nothing Biaſs'd from Juſtice and Religion in all its Parts, and Duties; by no Paſſion, no Prevailing Inclination. For, a great many Men carry off the Name of *Pious* and *Good*, either from their outward Zeal for the *Formalities* of Religion, or their Oſtentatious Acts of Chari-

ty, when, if their Lives were narrowly look'd into, they would be found Men, that ſtrive, at moſt, but to unite God and *Mammon*; but moſt commonly ſuch as make this Face, this Maſque of Religion, Procure for their Private Gain. They will build Hoſpitals with the Money they have Squeez'd from the needy Families, they have undone. Others, who will be continually at Church, and miſs no Lecture, or Sermon, who can recite the whole Bible, and quote Texts for all their Actions, are blind Slaves to ſome Paſſion, to the height of Injuſtice; they have no Compaſſion for their Fellow-Creatures; they are not touch'd for their Children, or neareſt Relations; they Oppreſs the Poor, never forgive; are great Detracters; Cenſorious and Revengeful. And yet, ſhou'd Misfortunes fall on any of theſe, Men, who ſee their appearance of Virtue, and Religion, and know not their Vices, will Murmur at *Providence* for letting the Juſt Suffer.

Men deal with Providence very unjuſtly; they give no Hearing to its Pleas, but run away with their Paſſion to Condemn Eternal Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of Folly and Iniquity, without Reflection.

5. Again, We ſhould conſider, whether the Misfortunes of the ſuppos'd Juſt, are owing to their own Follies, or Faults. A great many Men of tolerable Probity of Manners, want *Action*, Induſtry, and Application, to thruſt into Buſineſs, and are by that Means, diſappointed of their Hopes, and live, by Conſequence, in Want and Miſery. But this being their own defect of Induſtry, which muſt neceſſarily be made uſe of to effect any thing among ſuch a number of Oppoſitions, which

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naturally flow from ſo many contending *Free Agents*, it can, with no manner of Juſtice, be laid on *Providence*. Theſe Men are fond of Notions, deſtructive to the End they aim at, and Proud of an Honeſty, which is no more, than what every Man ought to have; they ſlight the only Humane Means of obtaining their Deſires, vainly expecting Miracles in their Behalf, meerly for doing part of their Duty. For a Recluſe, lazy Contemplation may be Innocent, that is free from Injury, but can hardly be Beneficial to our Neighbour; and that is but a Lame Virtue, that reaches no farther, than our ſelves, and juſtly is Excluded Succeſs in the Publick, that contributes nothing to the *Publick*. And I believe it will be a hard matter to prove, that any one of the Juſteſt that ſuffer, are not Guilty of Crimes ſufficient to acquit Providence, e'en for their Sufferings.

I meddle not with the Sufferers for Religion, they Repine not at it, as ſure of that Reward which its Author Promis'd; who foretold what they ſhou'd undergo for his Sake; their Sufferings being neceſſary to Plant what they Profeſs'd. Nor can it be otherwiſe, as I have ſaid, while Man is a *Free Agent*; and you muſt make him a meer Machine, before you can make this the Crime of *Providence*.

'Tis true, (interrupted *Pleonexus*) that the Judgments which Men paſs in this Nature, may be too Raſh, and Inconſiderate. Yet it cannot be deny'd, but that ſometimes, nay often, the Juſt Cauſe ſuffers, and the Unjuſt Succeeds. And if it be ever ſo, our Objection is in full force.

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I will own (replied *Chriſtophil*) that this is ſometimes true, but at the ſame time, you muſt own, that while Man is a *Free Agent*, and has Power to chooſe Good, and Evil, and yet ſubmits more to his Paſſion, than his Reaſon, this cannot be prevented, without a perpetual Series of Miracles. Nor even by that, without deſtroying the very Nature of Man in his Free Agency. For ſuppoſe an Avaritious Perſon becomes a Judge, and that while the Juſt Cauſe before him, truſts to its Merits, the Unjuſt Bribes him to the *Wrong*, as unable to reſiſt the Baits of Avarice, to which he is a perfect Slave. In chooſing the Injuſtice he acts according to the Freedom of his Nature, and brings therefore no juſt Reproach on Providence, unleſs you wou'd have had us made (as I have often ſaid) meer Machines.

This therefore being the meer Effect of the Nature and Conſtitution of Mankind, it is a plain Proof of the Immortality of the Soul, and future Rewards and Puniſhments; for God, that is neceſſarily Juſt, muſt Puniſh the Injuſtices of this Life hereafter; and infinitely atone by his Rewards, for thoſe Diſtreſſes which the Juſt may here ſuffer from the hands of the Unjuſt. And thoſe Men, who here would not hearken to the Dictates of their Reaſon, but ſubmitted to their Paſſions, the Conduct of their Lives, and by that means had no Regard to Juſtice, Virtue, or Religion, will have no Plea before the Tribunal of Providence for their Tranſgreſſions, becauſe their own Reaſon will Condemn them. For, at the ſame time, that Divine Providence gives Man that Freedom of Judging, Chooſing, and Acting, it gives him *Reaſon*, to direct him to Good,

Good, and to ſhun Evil. For, as there is no Precept of *Religion*, but what is highly Juſtified by *Reaſon*, ſo there is no Condemnation, which *Religion* aſſures us, that God will give, but at the ſame time *Reaſon* Confirms the Sentence.

Let not therefore the weak Vanity of Man, preſume to Arraign *Providence* for his own Crimes or Follies, when God has given, and does give every Man a Power ſufficient to follow the Precepts of *Righteouſneſs*, and an evident Mark of what is ſo, and what the contrary; for he cou'd not, nor can do otherwiſe, or leſs for Man, without being unjuſt, that is, without ceaſing to be God; nor cou'd he do more, without making Man an Image, a Machine, that is, without making him ceaſe to be Man.

What you have ſaid, indeed, (affirm'd *Philalethes*) has been out of my way of Reflection, and as it is now, ſeems extreamly reaſonable; but yet methinks, if Injuſtice were always puniſh'd here, by ſome evident Judgment, it wou'd more efficaciouſly deter Men from ſuch pernicious Ways. But the Generality of Men, either think not of the future Puniſhments, as not believing or forgetting them, or by a Flattery of themſelves with a diſtant Repentance.

The laſt is as fooliſh as impious, (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) ſince no Man is ſure of a Moment in this Life to repent in; and thoſe who can do Wickedneſs, with ſuch an Intention, gives but little Proſpect of a valid Repentance, which can never be real, where the Injury remains unſatisfied, and unaton'd; and thoſe are as ill *Chriſtians*, as Caſuiſts, that teach, *There can be any Pardon without Satisfaction.*

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As for the former, of not believing Puniſhments, that can fall in no Man but an *Atheiſt*; for whoever is ſatisfied of a God, cannot doubt of his Juſtice; and if not of that, by no means of his puniſhing the Breach of his own Laws, either in this Life or the next. As to the forgetting them, that is indeed, the moſt excuſable part, becauſe it has the Show, at leaſt, of Frailty. But yet that is an Argument of the little Efficacy of theſe peculiar Judgments out of the ordinary way of Providence. For there has been no Age, without ſome remarkable Puniſhments, even here on Earth, of Signal Injuſtices and Impieties; and there are indeed, more than are taken Notice of, or known. Men are, as you obſerved, too apt to forget the ſignal Judgments of God, either becauſe they ſeem not frequent, or elſe becauſe the prevailing Paſſion perſuades an Oblivion of what might put an end to its Tyranny. Yet the reading of the Holy Scriptures firſt and above all, and next of Hiſtories, juſtly written Tragedies, and the like, is extreamly uſeful to remember us of the Juſtice of *Providence*, and to put us in mind of the unhappy Events of Violence, Injuſtice, Intemperance, Pride, Oppreſſion; and to warn us of a Slavery to any one or more of the Paſſions.

How (interrupted *Pleonexus*) do you allow of the reading and ſeeing Plays? which all the Zealous of the Times, are ſo juſtly loud againſt.

I confeſs, (purſu'd *Philalethes)* I have ſeen the graveſt Pretenders to Religion, ſo hot againſt them, that I am ſurpriz'd at your favourable Word for them. I confeſs, I have generally found them Hypocrites.

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I ſuppoſe (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) that their Heat proceeds from the Abuſes of the preſent Stage, which is indeed, very abandon'd, and worthy the Inſpection of the Government, to reduce it to that State, that all good Men wiſh, *i. e.* that it might prove what Mr. *Collier* ſays it might be. For while he ſhows a juſt Indignation at the Corruptions of ours, he as juſtly allows the Uſefulneſs of the Drama, and with an Impartiality becoming a true Zealot for Religion, gives it a Praiſe, as great as juſt, in theſe Words.

The Buſineſs of Plays is to recommend Virtue, and diſcountenance Vice; to ſhow the Uncertainty of Human Greatneſs, and the ſuddain Turns of Fate: And the unhappy Concluſions of Violence and Injuſtice. 'Tis to expoſe the Singularities of Pride and Fancy, to make Folly and Falſehood contemptible; and to bring every thing that is ill, under Infamy, and Neglect.

In Purſuance of this, he aſſures us, that the Wit of Man, cannot invent any thing more forcible and uſeful, for the promoting Virtue, *&c.* So that an Eſteem for the Drama on that Account, cannot be unworthy a Lover of Virtue and Religion. Moſt of the Arguments againſt the Stage in general, are levell'd at the Audience, and the ill Effects of People meeting together. But to ſhow the Abſurdity of that, we need only conſider, that all Places where promiſcuous Company meet, are liable to the ſame Objections; and how impoſſible is it to put them all down, is as plain, as the Ridiculouſneſs of the Propoſal. 'Tis true, nor can it be denied, that there are ſeveral Irregularities in the Audience, that might be remedied, as well as thoſe of the Stage; if the Government had a more

more immediate Eye, on ſo publick an Entertainment. Then it might be made indeed, the School of Virtue, where Leſſons of the Judgments of Providence, might be daily learn'd, and where our Memory might be daily refreſh'd; that ev'n here Providence purſues the Wicked, and gives them an Earneſt of the Rewards, their Crimes muſt expect hereafter. And in my Opinion, a Wiſe and Religious State, ſhou'd always think the Stage worth the reforming and encouraging, for ſo uſeful and noble an End.

I muſt confeſs (aſſum'd *Philalethes*) that I have from this Stage, Corrupt as it is, often retir'd with Contempt of a Grandeur ſo ſubject to Chance, and a Deteſtation of Paſſions and Violence, which Reaſon Condemn'd, and the Poet juſtly Puniſh'd, as ſoon as the Fact was Committed; ſhewing us the Puniſhment at the ſame time that it ſhews the Offence, and have wiſh'd, that it were more frequently ſo in the Stage of the World.

I was going to that Point (replied *Chriſtophil*) when your Interruption threw me upon this Digreſſion. If they were frequent, the obſtinate part of Men, blindly bent on the unjuſt Gratification of their Paſſions, would believe, and perſwade others, that they were Natural, and by Conſequence, the Terror of them would ceaſe; if ſeldom, the few they were confin'd to the common Corruptneſs of Rumour and Report, and the like, wou'd leſſen their Force.

All Judgments are particular, and are therefore confin'd to certain Places of a narrow compaſs, and therefore Influence few beſides the Beholders; becauſe their Repreſentation depends on Rumour; which is generally ſo falſe,

that

that it weakens the force, even of Truth. Whereas the Laws of God, and Reaſon, are Univerſal, and reach all Mankind, and therefore thoſe who will not liſten to them, will not hear one from the Dead; for he that denies to ſubmit to, and be govern'd by that, which makes him a Man, will never be touch'd by any thing elſe. How Inefficacious theſe were, the Hiſtory of the *Jews* (if you allow it but a meer Hiſtory) will ſhew.

I have taken the more Pains, and detain'd you the longer on our Conſiderations of God, his Attributes, and the Vindication of his Providence, becauſe theſe are the Foundations of all Religion, and the ſureſt Conduct we can take to arrive at the Truth.

I confeſs (ſaid *Philalathes*) I have but one Difficulty remaining, which remov'd, wou'd heighten my Idea of the Goodneſs of God, and give me an Infinite Satisfaction, and that is, if I could find, that I was not only the Momentary Care of God, but the Eternal; that is, that he has given me an *Immortal Soul*, and that he has not ſhewn himſelf to us for a Day, ever to loſe the Contemplation of his Glory and Goodneſs for the Future.

I know not (Interrupted *Pleonexus*) whether that would be any great Concern to moſt Men, if the Laws, and Conditions of Salvation are as ſtrict in Reality, as ſome Men would have them be thought.

Ah Miſerable *Pleonexus*! (aſſum'd *Chriſtophil*) are you then ſo wretchedly mean in Spirit, to Prefer the Satisfaction of an Irrational Appetite, to the eaſie Yoke, that would free you from its Tyranny; deliver you from a Slavery no generous Mind wou'd bear? Cou'd you, for the ſake of the greateſt Folly, be content to

loſe

loſe the Glories of Eternity in abhorr'd Annihilation?

No, *Philalethes*! Much Nobler is your Deſire, and much more Rational. Cheriſh your Hopes, for *Immortality* is your Lot, and, if you pleaſe, a *Happy Immortality*, as will appear from what I have to offer on the Nature of the Humane Soul.

I muſt beg (ſaid *Pleonexus*) that this be a little defer'd; it dulls the Apprehenſion to keep the Mind too long intent on ſerious Contemplations. The Morning Invites, and I deſire an agreeable Walk before the Heat of the Day. The Fountains, Grotto's, and the Shady Wilderneſs, wou'd a little divert us, and make us come with clearer, and leſs tir'd Minds, to hear the Wonders *Chriſtophil* unfolds. I am infinitely pleas'd, that a Man of an Eſtate has employ'd his Thoughts on a Point, which only Pedants generally take care of.

I thank you for your Compliment, (reply'd *Chriſtophil*), but muſt Inform you, that it is not at all agreeable to me at the Expence of the *Clergy*; and I muſt aſſure you, that in ſo Numerous, and Learned a Clergy, as *England* has boaſted above theſe laſt Hundred Years, you will not juſtly Condemn many of them of Pedantry: When no Nation has come up to them, either in the depth of their Learning, the clearneſs of their Arguing, and the politeneſs of their Stile. I therefore rather believe, that you, *Pleonexus*, have not conſulted them; for if you had, you could not have entertain'd ſuch Principles, or ſuch Difficulties as you have diſcover'd. However, I think your Motion for a Walk very juſt, we will therefore take the advantage of the Morning's Air, and allow a Receſs till the Evening, for the better Proſecution of our Enquiry.

DIS-

Discourse the Fourth.

Of the Nature of the Humane Soul, and its Immortality, *against the Oracles of Reason and Second Thoughts,* &c.

Christophil had no sooner ended, but they rose up, and began their Walk, in which, among the various Discourses of Indifferent Matters, they often glanc'd on *Avarice*, as the most destructive Vice, that is, to both the Publick, and Private Happiness of any Nation; especially of a Free Country, as *England* is, which cannot be supported without Public Virtues, which Avarice alway destroys. But whatever was said either Directly, or Indirectly against the Darling Iniquity, *Pleonexus*, like a true Miser, never minded.

Their Walk being ended, Dinner over, and a chearful, but temperate Grace-Cup gone round; *Christophil*, by degrees slid into the Dispute. And *Pleonexus*, who desir'd not to live Eternally, unless he could enjoy his Bags Eternally, took up the Cause of the *Mortality of the Soul*, *Philalathes* being too willing to be convinc'd of the contrary, to hunt after aukward Arguments to destroy it, even in Supposition.

'Tis strange (said *Pleonexus*) that you shou'd believe the Soul Immortal, since you see Men Die every Day, and yet hear nothing from that Life they go to; not one comes to visit, or inform us, that we are not *all* Mortal.

Whence come you by the Knowledge of its *Immortality*? From outward *Senſation*, or inward *Reflection*? Not from outward *Senſation*, for that is only from what is Corporeal, and can affect the Senſes, but the Soul is Immaterial, and cannot therefore give *Senſation*, when ſeparate from the Body. --- Not from *Reflection*, for you have nothing there, but what you have firſt receiv'd the Image of from the Mediation of your Senſes. But, that the Senſes cannot convey the Senſation of a Spirit, is already prov'd. Tell not me of Apparitions and Ghoſts, which Women and Children admire, which the Follies of Youth, and the Dotage of Age have given a Being to, tho' they are really no where in Nature, but in the Diſcompoſed Brains of Enthuſiaſts; they are meer Day Dreams of ſickly Fancy, which always Vaniſh when the Judgment is awake. Banter not me with Spirits, Viſible to one, and Inviſible to another at the ſame time, which to allow, deſtroys all Certainty, all Knowledge, and by conſequence, your ſuppoſed Proofs of the Soul's *Immortality*. For, Body is the only Object of Sight, and Body that is Viſible to one Eye, muſt be ſo to another that is equally well. Theſe *Phantaſms* therefore, and pretended Apparitions, muſt be falſe, or all things elſe are uncertain.

Beſides you can draw no Proof from the Appearing of Spirits, or the Noiſes which they make, without giving Invincible Arguments of the Capacity, at leaſt, of the Mortality of the Soul: For unleſs the Soul be Material, it cannot become Viſible to the Eye, nor cauſe Sounds to beat on the Ear, for all Sound is the Effect of Body, if not Body, as ſome contend; now, if the Soul be Material, as if it appears

it muſt, it muſt have all the Properties of Matter, and by Conſequence may Diſſolve, ſince it is Diviſible; nay we have no Reaſon to think but it will diſſolve, ſince in its own Nature Diſſoluble.

But if it be not Matter, it could not appear, and ſo by Conſequence you can draw no Proof of the Soul's Immortality from the ſuppos'd Apparitions of Spirits, or Ghoſts of Men.

This leads me to the Reflections of *Pliny* on this Subject. 'There are (ſays he) various Opinions of the Place and State of the 'Soul after the Burial of this our *Mortal* Body: But the moſt general is, (purſues he) 'That we ſhall be in the ſame Condition 'after Death, that we were in before we 'were Born. Neither Body nor Soul having 'more Senſe after Death, than they had before this Life was given them in their Nativity. However, ſuch is the Folly, and Vanity of Man, that it Extends to Future Ages; nay, even in the very time of Death, 'Flatters it ſelf with fine Imaginations, and 'Dreams of I know not what after this Life. 'For ſome Crown the Soul with *Immortality*, 'others pretend a Tranſmigration of it, and 'others ſuppoſe, that the Ghoſts, after Separation from their Bodies, have Senſe, whence 'they render them Honour and Worſhip, making a God of him that is not ſo much 'as a Man. As if the manner of their Breathing differ'd from that of other living Creatures: And as if there were not to be found 'in the World, many more things, that live 'much longer, than Man; yet no body allows them the ſame *Immortality*. But ſhow 'me, if you can, what is the Subſtance (as

"it were) of the Soul by it self? What kind of "Matter? Is it distinct from the Body? Where "lies the Cogitation she has? How is her *See-* "*ing*, and how the *Hearing* perform'd, with- "out the Organs? How does she *feel*, or in- "deed, what does she do at all? How is she "Employ'd? Or, if there be none of all this "in her, what good can there be without them? "Again, I wou'd fain know where she re- "sides after her Departure from the Body? "And what an Infinite Number of Souls wou'd "there be in so many Ages, as well past, as "to come? Now surely these are but fanta- "stical, foolish, and idle Toys, invented by "Men who wou'd fain live always; the like "Foolery is there in preserving the Bodies. "Nor was the Vanity of *Democritus* less, who "promis'd a Resurrection of the Body, and "yet himself cou'd never rise again. But "what a Folly of Follies is it, to think, "that Death shou'd be the way to Second Life. "What Repose? What Rest cou'd ever the "Sons of Men have, if their Souls did remain "in Heaven above with Sense? while their "Ghosts, or Shadows are hurried beneath, "among the Infernal Spirits? Certainly these "sweet Inducements, and pleasing Perswasions; "this foolish Credulity, and easiness of Belief, "destroys the Benefit of the best Gift of Na- "ture, *Death*. It likewise doubles the Pains "of a Man, that is to Die, if he considers "what must become of him hereafter. How "much more ease, and greater Security were "it for every Man to ground his Reason, "and Resolution upon an Assurance, that he "should be in no worse Condition after Death, "than he was before he was Born.

Thus far *Pliny*, and I must think what he says,

very

very reaſonable, till I hear it Confuted.

To begin, (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) with your Authority from *Pliny*, and afterwards proceed to your own Reaſons, I muſt take notice to you, that the Book whence you have taken the Quotations, *viz.* The *Oracles of Reaſon*, might in the ſame Letter have confuted all you cou'd have built upon it. For thus ſays the Author of that Letter. *Yet there are no Arguments of greater Weight with me, than the abſolute Neceſſity and Convenience of it that it ſhould be ſo, as well to compleat the Juſtice of God, as to perfect the Happineſs of Man, not only in this World, but in that which is to come.* Thus you ſee, that your own Author owns, that the Juſtice of God cou'd not be compleat, if it were not ſo, whence it follows, that it muſt infallibly be ſo, becauſe the Juſtice of God cannot but be Compleat.

To ſay more of this Quotation, is only to remark, that it is only a Huddle of Doubts, how this can be, or how it is? But I hope, that his Ignorance either of the Manner, or the Thing, is no Argument againſt the Reality of it? Since he brings not one other Proof to confute it, it muſt at leaſt be allow'd even as an Opinion on, as good a Foot, and of an eqqal Probability with his; and when two things are equally Probable, 'tis moſt agreeable to Reaſon, and Nature, to entertain that, which gives a Proſpect of things moſt Comfortable, and moſt agreeable to our Deſires. But I doubt not to make it appear, that there is not ſo much as a Probability of the *Mortality* of the Soul, and as great a Certainty of the contrary, as the Attributes of God can give us, which I think is Infallible.

But how abſurd is that Part of your Quotation, where he calls *Death* the beſt Gift of Nature, when he, by his *Mortality* of the Soul, makes it a total Deprivation of all the Gifts of Nature at once? If the taking away of all the Gifts of Nature in one Moment be ſo great a Benefit, certainly, he muſt think the beſtowing all the Reſt the greateſt Curſe. For if indeed it it were true, that we wholly died with the Body, Providence cou'd not demand any Gratitude for our Productions in this Life, where our Days are generally *few and Evil.* For, indeed, we ſhould look only like the Dream of Providence, which Creates a Thouſand Fantaſtick Beings, that on waking, Vaniſh, and are no more. It cannot be the Reſult of an Omnipotent Good Being, *Terris tantum oſtendiſſe hominem*; to have given Man only a haſty and Tranſient View of his Wonders, and his Works, and then to Plunge him Eternally in his *Original Nothing.* This is an Opinion, contrary to all our Notions of God, oppoſite to all the Attributes of him, which I have already Demonſtrated; deſtroying his Juſtice and Goodneſs, and by Conſequence, his Exiſtence; for God can as ſoon ceaſe to be, as ceaſe to be *Good*, or *Juſt.* For the denial of one, includes the denial of the other. This Opinion, therefore, as plainly Atheiſtical, ought to be ſhun'd, and Contemn'd for its Folly, as well as Impiety.

What are your Boaſted Men of Reaſon, who require a Demonſtration for every thing before they admit it, as a Truth? Will they ſubmit their Reaſon for the ſake of Uneaſineſs, and Prejudice, to Abſurdities, and yet will not be ſatisfied with Moral Certainty for their Repoſe

poſe and Advantage? Theſe ſure muſt be Madmen, not Men of Senſe and Reaſon.

But I ſhall Confront your Quotation with another, of a much wiſer Man of Antiquity, which is *Marcus Tullius Cicero*, with his Judgment and Reaſons for the *Soul's Immortality*. It is in his Book, *De Senectute*, or *Defence of Old Age*. Where in a Dialogue he Introduces *Cato* the *Elder*, with *Scipio*, and *Lelius* Diſcourſing, among others, of this Point.

'I can ſee no Reaſon (ſays *Cato*) why I 'ſhou'd not Impart my Thoughts of Death to 'you, which, in my Opinion, I have the better 'View of, becauſe I am nearer to it. 'Tis 'my Opinion, O *Scipio* and *Lelius!* That 'your Fathers ſtill live, and enjoy that Life, 'which is only worthy the Name of Life, 'For while we are confin'd to the Priſon 'of theſe our Bodies, we perform the Du'ties of Neceſſity, and undergo a grievous 'Toil, and Fatigue. For the Cœleſtial Soul 'is thruſt down from its Exalted Home or 'Native Country of the Sky, and as it were, 'Drown'd on the Earth, which is a Place 'contrary to the Divine Nature, and E'ternity of the Soul. But I believe, that the 'Immortal Gods have diſtributed Souls to Hu'man Bodies, to Cultivate the Earth, who 'Viewing and Contemplating the Order of the 'Cœleſtial Bodies, ſhould reduce it to Imita'tion of the Manner and Conſtancy of their 'Lives. 'Tis not my Reaſon and Enquiry a'lone, that has given me this Belief, but it 'is confirm'd by the Nobility, and Authority 'of the greateſt Philoſophers; for I had heard, 'that *Pythagoras*, and his Followers (who 'were almoſt our Country-Men, and once cal'led the *Italic* Sect,) never made the leaſt Doubt,

'but that our Souls were given us from the 'Universal, Divine Mind, of which all things 'are full. I consider'd the last Words of *So-* 'crates too, on the Immortality of the Soul, 'the Day of his Death, who, by the Oracle of 'Apollo, was judg'd the Wisest of Men.

'What need I multiply Words? My Opi- 'nion is, that *when we consider the wonderful* 'Activity and Celerity of the Soul, its great Me- 'mory of things past, its Providence for those which 'are to come, the vast Number of Arts, the 'Excellence of Sciences, and the Multiplicity of 'Inventions, we can never imagine, that the Na- 'ture, which contains all these can be Mortal: 'And since the Soul is perpetually in Action, and 'has no other Principle of Motion, but it self, it 'can certainly never have End of Motion, since 'it is not likely, that it will desert it self. A- 'gain, since the Mind is a simple and uncom- 'pounded Nature, without any Mixture of any 'thing opposite, unequal, and unlike its self, that 'it cannot be divided; and that since it admits 'of no Division, it cannot Perish. And it is 'none of the most Contemptible Arguments, 'that Mankind knew most Things before they 'were Born; that in their Childhood, and 'Youth, while they Study difficult Arts, they 'learn Innumerable Things, with such Ad- 'dress, and Swiftness, that they do not seem 'then first to come acquainted with them, 'but to remember, and call them to Mind.

'What I have here urg'd, I have, for the most 'part, borrow'd from *Plato*. But *Cyrus*, on his 'Death-Bed in *Xenophon*, goes much farther. '*O my Dear Children, (says he) do not believe, that* 'when I depart from you, I shall be Nothing, or 'no where; for while I am yet with you, you can- 'not behold my Soul; but you know, that it has been,

'and

and yet is in my Body, from my Actions and my Sayings. Believe therefore, when I am Dead, that the ſame Soul remains, tho' it is not Obvious, and Viſible to your Eyes. Nor would the Honours paid to Great and Good Men remain after their Deceaſe; if we receiv'd no Influence, nor Impulſe from their yet Exiſting Souls, which continues their Memory the longer in us. And I cou'd never yet meet with any Argument, that cou'd Convince, or Perſwade me to believe, that our Souls liv'd only in our Mortal Bodies, but Died when they left them: Nor, that the Mind was any longer Frail, Ignorant, and Fooliſh, when it had made its Eſcape from the Body, to which it ow'd all theſe Defects; but that when it was freed from all Corporeal Mixture, pure and entire, then it was Wiſe. And when the Humane Frame, and Nature is by Death Diſſolv'd, we ſee Evidently enough whether each Part, and Particle of its material Part removes, for they all return to their Original; but the Mind is neither ſeen, when in the Body, nor when it leaves it. You find, that there is nothing more like Death, than Sleep. But the Minds of thoſe that Sleep, manifeſtly declares their Divinity; for being thus, as it were, at Liberty, and Free, they have a View of many things, that are yet in Futurity. Whence we may plainly gather what they will be, when once they are got entirely Free from the Clogg and Incumbrance of their Mortal, Material Bodies. Wherefore, if my Opinion be true (ſaid he) revere me as a God; but if the Soul Periſhes with the Body, do you, nevertheleſs, who Fear the Gods, by whoſe Power all this Beautiful Face of Nature is Defended, and Govern'd, Piouſly, and Inviolably Preſerve my Memory.

'This was the Opinion, and theſe the Words of *Cyrus*, on his Death-Bed. I will now, if you

'pleaſe,

'pleaſe, proceed to my own Notion of this 'Point. It will never be in the Power of any 'Man, to perſwade me (O *Scipio*!) that your 'Father *Paulus*, or your two Grandfathers, '*Paulus*, and *Africanus*, his Father, or his 'Uncle, or many other excellent Perſons, whom 'it would be tedious to enumerate in this Place, 'would ever have aim'd at, and with Labour 'accompliſh'd ſo many great and noble Deeds, 'in which the Memory, and Good of Poſteri-'ty were ſo much concern'd; if he had not in 'his Soul foreſeen, that Poſterity had not a 'relation to him. Do you Imagine (like a 'true Old Man to boaſt of my ſelf) that I 'wou'd have undertaken, and underwent ſo 'many Toils, ſo many Fatigues by Day, and 'by Night, in the City, and in the Camp, 'if my Glory and my Life were to have the 'ſame Bounds? Had it not on ſuch a Sup-'poſition, have been much better to let your 'Life glide ſmoothly and quietly away in I-'dle, Unactive Supinity, without the Labour, 'and Conteſts of an active Station? But the 'Mind lifts it ſelf up, as 'twere, with an 'Eye on Poſterity, and Futurity, ſo firmly 'fix'd, as if it imagin'd it did not begin to 'live till it had died here. But, if the Soul 'were not Immortal, the Minds of the beſt 'Men wou'd not be thus Unanimouſly aim-'ing at an Immortal Glory.

Thus far, *Pleonexus*, you hear *Cicero* by the Mouth of *Cato*, who, as he was before *Pliny* in Time, ſo he Excell'd him in Underſtanding, and has given ſubſtantial Reaſons from *Plato*, for the Immortality of the Soul. Whereas your *Pliny* offer'd nothing but *Peradventures*, if *it ſhould be ſo*, or *I do not underſtand how it can be ſo*, and the like, on ſo Important a Queſtion,

ſtion, as that of the *Immortality of the Soul.*

This Quotation of *Cicero*, does not only Anſwer yours of *Pliny*, but even your precious Queries, how we come to the Knowledge of this Immortality? Which will appear yet clearer, by taking a ſhort View of the Nature of the Mind. From whence it will appear, that the Mind being a diſtinct Subſtance from the Body, of different Properties, and a pure uncompounded Nature, there can be no thought, that it ſhou'd be Mortal, ſince Indiviſible. It remains in thoſe Gentlemen, who are for its Mortality, to prove, that it is Diviſible, and Material, that is, they muſt prove, that Matter, and Motion can think; for, to me, there appears no one Quality of Matter or Motion Analogous to Thought, as we ſhall ſee when I come to conſider the Difference, or Diſtinction betwixt the Body and the Soul.

But I ſhall firſt conſider the Means how we come to diſcover the Exiſtence of the Humane Soul, or to know its Qualities or Properties, which I ſhall alſo take a general View of.

There are different ways, by which the Knowledge of Things is convey'd to us, for we know not every thing in the ſame Manner, or by the ſame Means. Some we know by the Mediation, or Intervention of the Senſes: Such are all Corporeal Objects, which make their Approach to the Underſtanding, by ſtriking on our Senſes. Others we know by the Abſtraction of the Mind; when we Contemplate and conſider the Ideas, that are plac'd in the View of the Mind, without any External Architype which they are like; ſuch (among a Multitude of of others) are the abſtract Conſi-

derations

derations of Virtues, and Vices. Both theſe ſorts of Ideas are, and appear to us, as no part of the Mind it ſelf, but ſomething External, and diſtinct from, as well as without it.

But there is, beſides theſe, another thing, the Knowledge of which, we obtain neither by the Mediation of the Senſes, nor the Abſtraction of the Mind, whoſe Idea we find not as of a thing Extrinſick, or without our ſelves, but Intrinſick, and within. When we reflect, and enquire what we our ſelves are, who thus reaſon, think and enquire, we find a Self-conſciouſneſs, without any manner of Ratiocination, or chain of Argument, of ſome things, which are abſolutely in us: Which, tho' we cannot behold in Ideas, as in Pictures, like other things, yet we find them by our Internal Conſcience, to be actually within us.

But to make this more plain and intelligible by Example, I ſhall give an Inſtance of the Eyes, which diſcover, and know Objects and Things two ſeveral ways. Some they behold as Exiſting without, or Extrinſick, and others they perceive as Inherent in themſelves. All External Objects, for Example, which the Day diſcovers to their View, as Trees, Houſes, Fields, and the like, they View as Being Exiſtent abroad, and without the Ball of the Eye it ſelf; but their Senſation of the *Opthalmia*, or Inflamation of the upper Skin of the Eye, not as of an outward Object, but as of ſomething actually in themſelves. Thus that *Thinking Subſtance* within us, which we call the *Soul* or the *Mind*, finds many things Extrinſick to it ſelf, which, as certain Objects, it can conſider, ſurvey, and contemplate as it pleaſes: And beſides theſe, it obſerves what paſſes within it ſelf, or is, in other Words, *Conſcious of it ſelf*. From

From hence it will plainly and naturally follow, that the Mind cannot form any Judgment of it ſelf, that is not built on what it obſerves in it ſelf: It is therefore Ignorant of what Senſations it is capable of, till Experience has Inform'd it. Thus, a Man, that is born Blind, can never conceive, or ſo much as ſuſpect, that his Mind has any Capacity of the ſenſation of Colours, which he is abſolutely, and entirely Ignorant of. But, if we ſuppoſe him, either by any Courſe of Nature, by ſome unexpected Accident, or by ſome Miracle, come to his Sight, (as Hiſtory aſſures us many have done) then will he find his Mind capable of that Idea, or Senſation.

If therefore from the Univerſal Conſent of Mankind, we define the *Soul* or *Mind* to be that *Thinking Subſtance* within us, we muſt form our Deſcription of it to thoſe who enquire of its Nature, from thoſe Properties and Qualities we find in it, by that Internal Senſe, or *Self-Conſciouſneſs* we have mention'd. And from that we gather, that the Mind has *Perception*, *Underſtanding*, *Volition*, *Judgment*, *Ratiocination*, and that it decides, or determines with a perfect Freedom or Liberty, ſome particular Things, *&c.* The full Definition therefore of the Mind, is a *Being*, or *Subſtance*, *that has Perception*, *Thought*, *Will*, *Reaſoning*, *is Free*, *and the like.*

If our Enquirer will yet Preſs his Queſtion farther, and demand whether the Mind has not any other Qualities, or Faculties beſides what I have ſpoke of, all that can be reply'd, is, that we do not know, nor are able to aſſert any thing poſitive of that Particular, ſince, as the Blind Man, in the Idea of Colours, ſo we can never know, that we have

any

any one Faculty, till we have made uſe of it. If this will not ſtop your Curioſity, but that you muſt have a more exact Account of that Subſtance within us, that manages, and orders ſo vaſt a Variety of Thoughts; unleſs you prefer Dreams to Reality, and ſpecious Aſſertions to Reaſon, and Truth, you muſt be ſatisfied to hear, that all we know, or can know of the Mind, without a particular Revelation, is, that it *Thinks*. And that we have in our ſelves this thinking Faculty, is a thing ſo very plain, and is ſo Evident, that we cannot ſo much as Reaſon on that very Point, without being conſcious to our ſelves, that this Reaſoning Thing exiſts.

It being thus plain, that our *Soul*, or thinking Part Exiſts to give as great a Light, as *Providence* has allow'd, into the Nature of it, it will be proper to conſider ſome of thoſe Properties, which we do, with equal Certainty diſcover in it; and which is ſufficient to build its Immortality upon. The Knowledge of God, and that of the *Soul*, ſeem much alike, Reaſon gives us the higheſt Evidence that both are, and have ſuch and ſuch particular Properties, but Reaſon cannot deſcribe what the Nature or Subſtance of theſe Beings are.

The chief kinds of thoughts therefore, or Faculties of Thinking, are in number, ſeven, to take a ſmall View of each of which, I believe you may think very well worth our while, The firſt is the *Underſtanding*, by which, I mean that Faculty of the Mind, by which it *underſtands things abſolutely Incorporeal*, ſuch as are *Abſtract* Ideas, and whatever belongs, or relates to the Nature of the Mind it ſelf, in which we can diſcover no Corporeal Qua-

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lity or Property. This Faculty is often call'd the *pure Underſtanding*, and the Perception of its Proper Objects, a *pure Intellection*, it being Oppos'd to the Intellection of Corporeal Beings, or to that, by which Corporeal Ideas are perceiv'd.

They call the *Underſtanding* a *Paſſive Faculty*, becauſe in the Act of the Mind's underſtanding things, it properly does admit, or receive certain Objects. For, it is like the Eye, all whoſe action of Sight is to admit, or receive the Images of the Things under its View, neither adding to, or diminiſhing them. but receiving them juſt as they preſent themſelves before it.

The *WILL* is another Faculty, *by which we will, or will not conſider any thing in our Minds, or have the Body do any thing as far as it depends on the Diſpoſition, or Decree of the Will.* Thus it is the *Will*, that keeps any Object under the Conſideration of the Mind, or removes that, to bring ſome other in its Place; the *Will* likewiſe moves either Arm, or any other Member of the Body, that is ſubject to the Command of its *Volition.*

When we enquire into the Truth by a Compariſon of various Ideas, while they remain ſo obſcure, that we cannot plainly diſcover their Relation to one another, we ſometimes keep them longer under our Conſideration, and at other times quit them, without forming any Propoſition about them, only recording in the Memory, that they are obſcure, and uncertain, and ſometimes we acquieſce in a confus'd Collation of obſcure Ideas with one another, as if we had made ſome evident and certain Diſcovery, and commit to our Memory ſome Propoſition about them, as if clear, and known

known to us. There often is such an Evident Perspicuity in Ideas, that we immediately, and without delay, debate, or hesitation, form Propositions of them, and these we call Judgments; which are said to be restrain'd, forborn, or suspended. When the Doubtful, and Fluctuating Mind dismisses the Matter, either to a farther Consideration, or to another Time, or for Ever, without committing any manner of Proposition about it to the Memory.

The Faculty of *PERCEPTION* or *SENSATION*, is that, by *which we Perceive or Feel in our selves from some Motions of the Body, Pain, or Pleasure, or any other Thought or Sensation, whether we will or not.* There is no Difficulty at all in this; and the best way of Explaining it, is, for every Man to descend into himself, and observe what passes in his own Mind.

LIBERTY is a Faculty of the Mind, by which, it has a Power of Granting, or Denying its Assent to any Proposition; to wish, or not wish any Good, or Evil, Indulge, or Banish any particular Thought, or Thoughts. To Illustrate this by an Example, we can, or are at Liberty to believe, that there is, or is not, a Presiding Genius, or Spirit in the Moon, which gives it its Motion; we have it in our Power to wish, or not to wish, for any particular thing, or to turn our Thoughts, or Understanding to another Object.

But, to say a little more of this Faculty of *Liberty*, on which the foregoing Defence of Providence so much depends, there are three things that we must observe about it. 1. That we attribute it to the *Mind*, and not to the *Will*; for, since the *Will* is but a Faculty of the *Mind*, another Faculty cannot in-

inhere in it as its Subject, if we would ſpeak properly.

Another thing that we muſt obſerve, is, that Philoſophy, that is, Reaſon divides *Liberty* into Liberty of *Contradiction*, and Liberty of *Contrariety*, as they are term'd from the Nature of their Acting. The firſt, is that, by which the Mind can act, or not act, when one only thing is propos'd to be done. The ſecond, is that, by which the Mind can chooſe to do this, or that, when there are more, than one propos'd to be done. But the latter is indeed, only two different Acts of the former; for, when I chooſe rather to read *French*, than *Dutch*, firſt at this time I will not read *Dutch*, and next, I had rather read *French* than not read at all. We may eaſily therefore make a Judgment of the Liberty of *Contrariety* by this of *Contradiction*, for I have not Time to diſcuſs every Particular in all its Extent.

In the third Place, *Liberty* muſt not be confounded with *Spontaniety*, for *Spontaniety* is the ſame as the *Will*, for the Mind cannot act but *Spontaneouſly*, that is, by *Willing* or *Volition*, for that is only the Action of the Mind, ſo that to deprive it of *Spontaniety*, you rob it of the *Will*. Yet there are Times and Conjunctures, when the Mind is not free either in its Aſſent, Deſire, Senſation and Will. Of which, more at large.

Firſt, We muſt obſerve, That when our Mind conſiders Ideas, whoſe Relations to each other have attain'd the higheſt Perſpicuity, we cannot deny our Aſſent to the Propoſitions the Mind forms out of them. Thus we cannot think two Numbers unequal, which, on compariſon we find equal; for Example, on our

comparing thrice Ten to Thirty, no Man can entertain the leaſt doubt, but that they are Equal. But, on the contrary, we find by Experience, that while the Ideas, we compare, are yet Obſcure, we can doubt of that Relation, which we cannot diſtinctly Diſcern. Thus, when I have only lightly run over the ſeveral Sums, that Compoſe any two Numbers, but do not diſtinctly know them, I am at Liberty to doubt, whether they are equal, or unequal, and can Determine on which Side I pleaſe, tho' ſuch a Determination would be Raſh, and Ill-grounded. Every Day's Experience furniſhes us thus with Men poſitive in their Deciſions of the moſt Important, and weighty Affairs, which are evidently Obſcure, and Unknown. But this proves, that there is a *Liberty* of Judging in things, that are Obſcure; tho' there be none in Things that are Evident.

Secondly, All Men, by the Bent of Nature it ſelf deſire Happineſs; all that they do, all that they deſign, tends to this End, *That they may live Happily, and, if poſſible, extend that Happineſs to Eternity.* They are Born to this, with ſo impetuous a Force, that it is not in their Power to incline to, or aim at the contrary, even not to wiſh for *Happineſs.* Wherefore, when the Queſtion is of the *Summum Bonum*, or *Supream Good*, *HAPPINESS*, the Mind has no *Liberty* of deliberating, for that, we all of Neceſſity deſire. But as for the *Inferiour Goods*, ſuch, as are all the Goods of Fortune, and all the things, which relate to this preſent Life, we are entirely free to deſire, or not to deſire, to ſeek, or to neglect: We are not born down to them by an Irreſiſtible Appetite, and Deſire. To make this more plain by a familiar

miliar Example, every Man finds in himself a *Liberty* of Desiring, or Neglecting that Pleasure, which arises to the Taste from the Eating any particular Fruit. When we suppose the Fruition of any present Good Productive of Mischief to us hereafter, we can, and do avoid, and reject it. But there is nothing in Nature, that has Power to Extinguish our Thirst of *Supream Happiness*. Hence we find, that our desire of Particular Good is *free*, but that our desire of the *Supream Good*, which comprehends all, is *Necessary*.

Thirdly, There are some *Sensations*, which by the Body's Disposition, and Affection, we must have, and which we cannot, with all our Force, or Power, forbid, or avoid, or even remove, during the time of their Operation. Thus, if the Hand that is well, and sound, be Burnt, 'tis impossible for us to avoid a very troublesome, and Painful *Sensation*, in spight of all our Unwillingness that it should be so; and on the contrary, in the drinking any agreeable Liquor, when the Body is in its just State of Health, we of Necessity have a pleasing *Sensation*; and in this there is no *Liberty*. But then we have absolute Liberty to avoid External Causes of Pain, or Grief; or of applying them to our Bodies, if we believe, that this present Pain will produce us Health, or any greater Good hereafter. Here I must observe, that the Mind Spontaneously, and willingly receives the *Perception*, or *Sensation* of Pleasure, but not with *Liberty*, for we cannot help the Pleasure, for Example, that attends the drinking of cool Ale, or Water, when we are extreamly Thirsty.

You may perhaps, ask, *How the Mind is determin'd to Volition in those things*, in which it is

free? The Answer the School-men give to this Query amounts to no more than that when the Mind judges any thing to be *Will'd*, it *Wills* it. Which, tho' true, for to judge a thing to be *Will'd*, and to *Will* it, is all one; yet is no Solution of the Question; which is not Answer'd till you can show what it is, that inclines the Mind; and determines it to pass its Judgment.

We must therefore, more justly reply, that the Mind, most commonly, has some Reason in its Eye, and that sometimes more clear, and sometimes more obscure, arising from our own Disposition, and from the Objects themselves, that determines it to *Will*. But when the Mind judges of a *Free Case*, the Cause of its Determination is in it self, for it Acquiesces, because it *will* Acquiesce, which Volition has no *Necessary* Cause. Suppose, for Example, that I am to determine, or not determine, of something that is not known, what is it, that inclines my Mind to Judge, or not to Judge? There are, it is true, often Reasons of one side, but those not being Invincible, the Query still is what it is, that adds weight enough to them, to Poise us to their Side? It is plain, that since we, who determine in this manner, can produce none, then there is none but the Innate *Liberty* of the Mind, by which it is born to what it will in *Obscure things*, and *particular Goods* without any Impulse or Force from any Exteriour Cause.

There is another Question (for I am unwilling to omit any thing on this Head) propos'd, and that is, *Whether or no the Mind, after it has determin'd, or judg'd, that such a thing is to be done, can, notwithstanding, do contrary to its Judgment thus pass'd?* But this

Queſtion ariſes from an Ignorance of what a *Judgment* of the Mind is; for the Mind's Judging a thing to be done, is doing it, as much as the Mind can. For, ſuppoſe the thing to be determin'd by the Mind be, *Whether we ſhall believe the Goſpel, or not?* If the Judgment of the Mind be in the Affirmative, in paſſing that very Judgment, it belives it; for, to Judge a thing to be true, and to believe it, is all one. The ſame will hold on the contrary.

But you will ſay, that the Mind very often Judges that to be done, which is contrary to what it judges true, or juſt: That is, when it fights againſt the Internal Light, in External Actions, in which the Body intervenes. This appears in a Man's committing Murther by the Inſtigation, or Force of ſome prevailing Paſſion, tho' he has always Judg'd Murther Unlawful. The Mind may alſo paſs a true Judgment on a thing, and afterwards paſs a falſe one on the ſame Object, forgetting the former, either through Weakneſs, ſome Paſſion, or any other Cauſe; and it may falſly adapt general Judgments to Particulars. In theſe Caſes the Mind is ſaid to act contrary to its Conſcience, or its Judgment given before. But it never does, at the ſame Numerical time Exerciſe the Acts of *Volition*, and *Nolition*, for that is a Contradiction, and therefore Impoſſible.

The Queſtion ſtill remains, what ſhou'd determine the Mind to Murther rather than to abſtain from Blood? Deciſions of this Nature flow not from a ſedate and tranquil State, and Judgment of the Mind, which can only ariſe from a through Compariſon, and Examination of the Ideas of the Matters under

Consideration, but from some *Passion*, which we still Indulge with Pleasure. Thus is the Mind determin'd to Murther, not by Comparison of Ideas, but by a kind of Brutal Impulse, or Force, which in the Vehemence of Passion gives a Pleasure.

This Observation will hold good in all things, which we do without being Influenc'd by any Reasons for the Action; for we are hurried to them by the Importunity and Force of that Pleasure, which we find in the doing it: And the Mind is busied, and taken wholly up with the only Thoughts of the Pleasure, without any farther Examination.

But this Pleasure which proceeds from our Compliance with an Injurious Passion, is not of that Force and Power, as necessarily, and inevitably to compel the Mind to that Determination, as it is of necessity, born to the Love of the *Supream Good*. To prove which, we need only consider, that if the Law-givers, and Magistrates of all Counties should, under the highest Penalties forbid the Desire of our *Summum Bonum*, or *Supream Good*, and should inflict the most exquisite Torments on all those, who by any Action should discover their desire of *Eternal Happiness*, how soon wou'd they Extinguish all Humane Kind; and if they wou'd submit to their own Laws, having slain all other Executioners, they must lay Violent Hands on themselves. For, that Desire is no more to be dissembled, than avoided; but on the other hand, if the Prince, or Magistrates of any Country forbid the drinking of Wine, and Punish the Wine-drinkers with great and severe Penalties of Mulcts, Torments, or Life, they wou'd in a little time root the desire of drinking Wine out of the Minds of all their Subjects.

From

From all this it is apparent, that the Mind is free in giving, and denying its Aſſent to all Obſcure Propoſitions, but not to thoſe, which are Evident, and alſo in embracing, or rejecting *particular Goods*, which are not the *Supream Good*, to which we are Neceſſarily and Spontaneouſly carry'd, That it can Judge of things not Evident, or ſuſpend its Judgment about them, and ſeek, or neglect particular Goods.

The School-men propoſe this Queſtion, *Whether the Mind can Incline to an Evil, as an Evil?* Which they Juſtly and Unanimouſly deny; for here the Word *Evil* only means what we Judge a Pain, without any Equivalent Pleaſure, or Advantage. But as long as a thing ſo diſpleaſes us, that is, as long as the Will is averſe to it, it cannot Pleaſe, that is, the *Will* cannot be Inclin'd to it, for theſe are Contradictions.

What has been ſaid of the *Liberties of the Mind* here, will ſufficiently clear that Point of our *Free Agency*, on which I built my Vindication of Providence in the Affairs of Mankind; ſince it is apparent from what has been ſaid, that the Mind is entirely *free* in its Choice of particular Goods, whether they are *Real*, or *Apparent*; and that there is *Right Reaſon* to diſtinguiſh betwixt a *Real*, and *Apparent* Good, as well as betwixt a *Moral* Good, and a *Moral* Evil, and that therefore, where a Man purſues the latter, and rejects the former, he acts againſt his own Conviction, and by Conſequence, offends as much againſt Reaſon, as againſt God, which juſtifies Providence in all its Diſpenſations. But, to proceed to the reſt of the Faculties of the Mind, and the next of the ſeven is Imagination, or Fancy.

Incorporeal things, such as abstract Ideas, and general Propositions, &c. are not the only Objects of our Understanding, but it considers also the Images of Corporeal Things, both when they are actually before our Eyes, and also in their Absence. Thus in the Day-time we see a Tree, when it is in reality the Object of our Eye; and we Dream of this Tree in the Night, and we recall the Image of this Tree when we are awake, and absent from the Tree it self; and this Power, or Faculty of the Mind we call the Fancy, or Imagination, because it considers, or contemplates the Phantasms, or Images of Corporeal Things.

To be particular on every Faculty, would be too tedious, and of no great use to my present Design; which is only to give you such a View of the Mind, that from its Properties you might be led to the Wonders of the Creator in making it, and the certain Notices of its Immortality, which I shall go to, as soon as I have said a Word or two to the Memory, and the Habits of the Mind.

The Faculty of the Mind, which we term *Memory*, is that, by which we so recall the Images of Corporeal things, and the Ideas of the Incorporeal things, which we have understood, or perceiv'd, or had any *Sensation* of, as to set the Idea of them before the Mind when we Please. To attempt to describe the *Modes*, or Manner of the Mind's Exercising of this Faculty, wou'd be to wander in the Dark; for, all that we could gain, wou'd amount to no more, than a very Precarious Probability. It is sufficient for us, that we find this Faculty is in our Minds, and the knowledge of its means and manner of Working is of no manner of Use, or Service to our Advantage, or Happiness.

I come

I come now to the *Habits* of the Mind, which from their Definition, and Nature will indeed appear to be ſcarce any diſtinct Faculty from that of the *Memory*, for we define *a Habit of the Mind* in general *to be a certain Diſpoſition, acquir'd by repeated Acts, by which the Mind does, with more Eaſe, think of any particular, or* Wills *any thing with greater Facility, than it did before.* Thus, by a frequent reading of Geometrical Books, our Mind acquires a *Habit* of underſtanding Mathematical Demonſtrations, without any Pains or Labour; tho' they ſeem extreamly difficult at firſt View, even thoſe who are very Perſpicacious, and of extraordinary Penetration.

To run through the Diſpute, and ſhow, that all *Habits* of the Mind, both Intellectual, and Moral, are eaſily reſolv'd into the *Memory*, wou'd be Superfluous; it being ſufficiently Obvious to any Man, that will give himſelf time to think.

Thus much for the Properties, that we Evidently diſcover in the Mind, of which we ſhall make this Uſe, and from which we ſhall draw this Doctrine, that there is plainly a Diſtinction betwixt the Mind, and the Body, which will open a way to the Proof of the Immortality of the Soul, which it concerns us ſo much to Eſtabliſh on the ſureſt Foundations.

But a little cloſer to enquire into the Diſtinction betwixt the Mind and Body, we muſt conſider the Properties of each, and compare them together: We have already defin'd the Soul or Mind *to be that Subſtance within us, that thinks*, but we call that Subſtance the Body, which we find, or perceive adhering to that *Thinking Subſtance, and which is extended,*

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diviſible, and ſolid, and compos'd of various Parts, of various Shape and Figure.

There is no Man ſure, in his Senſes, but will confeſs, that the Spiritual Faculties, or Properties, ſuch as the *Underſtanding*, *Will*, *Senſation*, *Liberty*, and the like, are vaſtly different from thoſe, which we call *Corporeal* Properties, ſuch as *Extenſion*, *Diviſibility*, *Solidity*, &c. For on our comparing them together, we ſhall not find the leaſt Affinity, or Relation betwixt them. Let us for Example, compare the *Faculty of the Underſtanding* with *Extenſion*, and we ſhall not be able to find any thing common to both, and this will hold Good in all the other diſtinct Qualities of the Soul, and the Body.

This is the Reaſon, that none was ever ſo wild as to ſuſpect, *Thought* to be in any thing, in which we can diſcover nothing but *Extenſion*, Diviſibility, Solidity, various Figures, and Motion. Who, for Example, that ſees a Wooden Bowl in the Green, did ever fancy, that it it was indu'd with Thought, or Underſtanding? We may well therefore deny, that Bodies can think, ſince we can make no Diſcovery of any thing in their Nature, that holds any Analogy with Thought.

Having laid this Foundation, when we find within our ſelves various Thoughts, we are ſenſible, that they cannot by any Means, be attributed to that Part of our Being, which is *Extended*, *Diviſible*, and *Solid*. And we reaſonably conclude, that the Subject in which our Thoughts, as it were, Inhere, is ſome certain Subſtance perfectly diſtinct from that, which is indu'd with the *Corporeal* Properties. The only way we have to the knowledg of the unknown Properties of Beings, is by thoſe which are known;

known; and ſince all the Attributes, or Qualities of Body and Mind, which we do know are ſo very different, we Rationally contend, that thoſe which we do not know, are ſo too. And it remains on thoſe, who are for the *Corporiety* of the Soul, to demonſtrate, how Matter, and Motion, or Extenſion; Diviſibility, Solidity, variety of Figure, *&c.* can produce a Thought. If this be a Task above their Capacity to perform, they require a very unreaſonable thing of us, to quit a Rational Opinion, for one that is ſo very much in the dark, that they cannot make out the leaſt Part of it.

This leads us to our laſt Conſideration of the Soul, its Immortality, for the ſake of which it was brought into our Diſpute; for if that be Mortal, all our Enquiries about God, and Religion, are of no Uſe, nay, muſt be very Idle Amuſements. And it is obſerv'd by a very great Author, that there never was any one, that oppos'd the Immortality of the Soul, that either explicitly, or implicitly did not Attack the Being of God likewiſe. The *Epicureans*, who are the mighty Patrons of this Doctrine, while they pretended to talk Magnificently of the Deity, Broach'd the moſt abſurd, and derogatory Notions of him, that ever Men cou'd Invent. The Mortality of the Soul leſſens our Idea of that great Good, and wiſe Being, who made all things, and indeed, by a cloſe and evident Conſequence, denies his very Exiſtence.

I have often enough defin'd the Soul to be *that Subſtance within us, that thinks*, and by *Death*, I underſtand not every Change, but either *Annihilation*, or ſuch a Change as deſtroys all the Faculties of any thing, and therefore that the Soul is to be call'd *Immortal*, if it either be not Anni-

Annihilated, nor ever ſo Chang'd, as to loſe thoſe Properties, that we now find in it.

This being the ſtate of the Queſtion, it is not to be doubted, but, that God, if he Pleaſes, can Annihilate the Soul, as well as all other Subſtances whatever, as he drew them all out of nothing in their Original. But we ſhall hereafter ſhow, that he will not do this from the very Principles he has fix'd in the Mind. That it is in its own Nature Periſhable, they very weakly attempt to prove, who draw as a Conſequence from the Periſhing of the Body; for it is a very abſurd Deduction, that becauſe the Parts of the Body are diſſipated, therefore the Soul, which does not conſiſt of Diviſible Parts, ſhall be ſubject to Diſſipation, or be depriv'd of its Properties, or be annihilated; for, ſince the Mind is evidently, from what has been ſaid, of a diſtinct Nature to the Body, the Change of the Body cannot Neceſſarily reach the Mind.

I ſhall here, only for Brevity ſake, demand what is already prov'd; firſt, that Mankind had a Beginning. Secondly, that he receiv'd his Beginning from ſome other Cauſe more Excellent than himſelf, ſince Nothing comes out of Nothing. And Thirdly, that this firſt Cauſe, whom we call *God*, Plac'd us here with a beneficent, not a malevolent Intention; that is, that the Deſign of our Production was for our Advantage, not Prejudice: As is Evident from that Infinite Number of Good things, with which he has ſurrounded us, ſuch as the large Increaſe of the various, and excellent Products of the Earth, which in their Uſe afford us ſo much Advantage, and ſo conſiderable Pleaſure. Nor muſt we forget, that God has ſo contriv'd our Conſtitution, that

he

he has annex'd a very great Pleasure to the satisfying the very Infirmities of Nature; as in Eating, or Drinking after Hunger, and Thirst, *&c.* The fourth Postulatum is, that by the Necessity of the Humane Constitution, Mankind cannot subsist without mutual Offices, unless it incurr the greatest, and most Insupportable Evils; as has already been made out; for what Security cou'd one Man alone, independent of all others, pretend to? Or how indeed, compass all the Necessaries of Life?

There is no Man, that is not fond in the greatest Degree imaginable of Cavilling, that will not allow the former *Postulata*, or Desire a longer Proof of what bears the force of a Self-Evident Principle. Now therefore, let us suppose, that all Mankind perform'd all the Offices, and Duties of Humanity, and Love to one another, so that the whole Race of Men liv'd with that Conduct to one another, which the neareſt, and deareſt Relations pay mutually to each other. There seems nothing more to be desir'd, to compleat this suppos'd Happiness, but that this Life shou'd endure for Ever, without the Inconveniences, and Disturbance of Diseases; or, that, if this were to be lost, that it might be exchang'd for another Life, not Inferiour to this in Happiness, and Secur'd by *Eternity*. Nay, if we will give our selves the Pains to Reflect on our own Minds, we shou'd find fix'd, and woven into our very Nature, a necessary, and unavoidable Thirst and Desire of a Happiness so compleat, and perfect, that nothing shou'd be wanting to provoke our Wishes, and Desires for something more; or to move our Fear of any Evil to come. This is the Sum and Sence of all our Wishes, and Hopes, to which we are

Born,

Born, with so Irresistibile an Impetuosity, that nothing less than such a Happiness will satisfie the Desires of our uneasie Minds.

The Natural Consequence of this, is, that all those Benefits, all those Favours, and Advantages we have receiv'd from the Benificent Deity, wou'd be of no Value, empty and fruitless, unless we were to enjoy a Perpetual, and Eternal State of Happiness. For, cou'd we heap up all the Wealth, engross all the Delicacies, enjoy all the Delights, that this mortal, frail Life can afford, yet we must be reduc'd to the most dismal, and most grinding Sorrow, when we must Die in the greatest Pain, and Misery, beholding Death robbing us for Ever of all we held so dear, and without any Hopes of repairing the Loss, destroying for Ever all those most agreeable, and most delightful Enjoyments. At that Moment wou'd all the Good we had Possess'd, change into the most Poisonous Venom, and Rack us with Tortures, proportion'd to the greatness of the Excellence of the Pleasures we had Enjoy'd. It wou'd be with us, as with a Man in his full Health, Appetite, and Strength, that remembers indeed, that he once had Affluence of all manner of Delicacies, and Food, but saw, that he must now in a few Days, or Hours, Perish by Hunger. The Memory of his past Plenty wou'd aggravate, not lessen his present Calamity.

If therefore we were to Die, without any hopes of Happiness after this Life, that Benefcent Deity would ev'n now seem, and with great Reason be thought to have given us all the Goods of this Life, not with a design of doing us Good, but meerly to stir up an insatiable Desire, which he never intended to satisfie,

ſatisfie, that is, that he gave all theſe Apparent Goods, the Evident Effects of his Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, for our Puniſhment, for our Miſery, not Happineſs. He has planted in our Souls, has wove into our very Natures, a neceſſary, reſtleſs, and inſatiable Deſire, and Avarice (if I may ſo call it from its force) of an abſolute, and compleat Happineſs; he has here diſcover'd a Part of that, to raiſe our Deſires higher, to wake us to Wiſhes for the reſt; is it then conſiſtent with either the Goodneſs, or Juſtice of God, after he has of his own Accord in our Conſtitution, and Formation, impreſt Appetites, and given ſuch ſtrong and vigorous Hopes, of a ſuddain, to hurl on us a total deſpair in Death of all that his Power, his Goodneſs, and his Works had promiſed us in Life? He won'd do by us like that Tyrant, who, to glut his Revenge, order'd a Man to be ſtarv'd to Death at a full Table, by perpetually ſerving up variety of Diſhes, but hinding him from a Power of taſting one; and this to compleat the Savageneſs of his Cruelty, he ſate and ſaw.

Can Humane Imagination form any thing more exquiſitely Cruel? Wherefore we muſt of Neceſſity come to this, that we muſt declare, that Nature the moſt Cruel, from whom we receiv'd ſo many, and ſo very conſiderable Benefits, or that he denies us this Eternal Happineſs, becauſe it is not in his Power to grant it.

The third is as abſurd as it is Blaſphemouſly Impious, and Unjuſt. For it is both abſurd, and unjuſt too, without any manner of Reaſon or Cauſe to ſuſpect, that God is guilty of *Cruelty*, who has given us certain, and evident Marks, and Notices of his *Goodneſs*. But we ſhou'd,

without

without Cauſe ſuſpect, that God wou'd not beſtow Eternal Happineſs on us, till we were convinc'd, that we ought not to expect it from him. But how can we poſſibly be ſatisfied beyond all manner of Doubt, that God has not the Will and Intention to grant us this Bliſs? We ſee, that we have receiv'd innumerable Benefits from him already, whence we may reaſonably conclude, that he will be Beneficent to us hereafter, if by our own Vices, which are abſolutely in our own Power, we do not deprive our ſelves of the Advantage. We find, that in the midſt of the depravity of Mankind, there is no cauſe of Cruelty, or Avarice, but Weakneſs; and few Men are ſo very abandon'd, as wou'd deny that to another, which was no Prejudice to himſelf. What Miſer ſo great as wou'd deny a Pin to ſave the Life of a meer Stranger? Weakneſs you cannot ſuppoſe capable of falling into the Nature of God, and by conſequence you cannot ſuppoſe him *Cruel*: 'Tis a Contradiction of his Deity; and that he ſhou'd deny Man that Happineſs which he has made him deſire, is contrary to that *Goodneſs* already demonſtrated in the Deity: The Miſer's Pin is infinitely more to him, than the Happineſs we contend for, to God, for he parts with nothing from himſelf, in making Infinite Myriads of Beings happy. It cannot therefore be the Defect of his Will, if our Soul be not *Immortal*, that is capable of Eternal Happineſs; it muſt therefore be the deficiency of his Power, if our Souls are Mortal.

But it labours with as great an Abſurdity, to ſay, that God cannot give us perpetual Happineſs; for how can we ſuppoſe, that the Deity, who gave us our firſt Exiſtence out

out of nothing, ſhou'd not be able to make part of us perpetually Exiſt after Death, or to make the whole Man at laſt live again, notwithſtanding his Body be before ſeparated into ten thouſand Millions of Atoms; this is not harder than the making us out of nothing.

Hence it is evident, that God both *Will* and *can* beſtow on us *Eternal Beatitude*, which it is Impoſſible to do, unleſs that *thinking Subſtance* within us eternally Exiſt, that is, unleſs the Soul be *Immortal*. If therefore, from what I have ſaid, and the evident Deductions from evident Principles, which I have made, it be thus demonſtrated, that God has both the Will and the Power to give us Eternal Happineſs, it neceſſarily follows, that the Soul is Immortal.

The Argument I have urg'd, ſuppoſes, that God wou'd not act agreeably to his Goodneſs, if he did not give the Humane Soul an Eternity of Exiſtence in Happineſs, tho' he enjoy'd all the Goods and Pleaſures of this Life in the greateſt Abundance, and Extent; but this Argument will be yet ſtronger, when we reflect, that no Man can enjoy them all, both by the Weakneſs of our Body, and other inevitable Caſualties; but above all, by the violation of that Law, which Nature it ſelf, and the Conſtitution of Humane Affairs teach us. I have already told you, that Men were plac'd here to help and aſſiſt one another, becauſe the leſs they do ſo, the more Miſerable they are; as their Happineſs encreaſes, the more that Rule is obſery'd. Tho' this be ſo very evident, yet Men, blinded by their Paſſions, too generally ſtrive to do all the Prejudice they can to each other, which has

made this Life ſo far from happy, that it has render'd it the moſt Miſerable. And very often thoſe, who moſt regard, and obſerve that Law of Nature, Reaſon, and Religion, are made the moſt unhappy; that is, that thoſe who live moſt according to the Divine Will, they are often the moſt unhappy of Men. I mean by this, that they enjoy the leaſt ſhare of the Goods of this Life, which would be the greateſt Miſery, if there were no Immortality of the Soul.

Having laid down theſe Premiſes, 'tis a reaſonable Queſtion to ask, whether we can ſuppoſe from thoſe Attributes we have diſcover'd in God, that he ſhou'd have regard to them leaſt, who obſerve that Law moſt, which he himſelf has Planted in Humane Nature, and by the obſervation of it, beget to themſelves Miſery, which by the breach of it, they might perhaps have avoided, that is, might have enjoy'd more of the Goods of this World. There can be no manner of doubt made, but that God, who gave Mankind Exiſtence at firſt out of Nothing, and framing him according to his own Pleaſure, and ſo giving what Neceſſities of Nature, and what Laws he thought convenient for the well-being of his Creature (for no Man can ſuppoſe Man made with a Malevolent Intent) by which he commands a Mutual Help, and Aſſiſtance of Man, and Man muſt, by conſequence, approve their Lives, which are Conducted according to theſe Laws fix'd in the Conſtitution of Mankind, and Humane Society. But if God approves of their Actions, and Conduct, is it poſſible for us to believe, that he wou'd neither exempt them from the Miſeries of this Life, nor give them any Re-

wards

wards after this Life? For, if we shou'd suppose, that he did not recompence the Miseries thus Incurr'd, by a Compliance with, and Obedience to his Laws in this Life, with some proportionable Reward in the next, we must suppose him to contradict his own Will, which is Impossible, since his Will is apparent, that Men shou'd help, and assist one another, and yet shou'd suffer those who most obey'd this Precept, to be most subject to Misfortunes.

From the Miseries therefore of the truly Good, that their Virtues subject them to in this Life, we draw a certain Conclusion of the Immortality of the Soul. Because if that were not so, it wou'd be Evident, that God wou'd have no Regard to the Pious, and truly Good; and how great an Absurdity that is, we have seen.

Thus meerly by the Rules of Right Reason, we find the Immortality of the Soul, and the Absurdity of the contrary Opinion. And if Humane Reason go so far, wherever it fail of that full Satisfaction you perhaps would desire, as perhaps thinking nothing a Demonstration but Experience, Divine Revelation comes in to your Relief, to assure you, that your Soul is Immortal; so, to put an end to your Melancholly Reflections, to remove your Painful Doubts, and assure you from God's own Mouth, of that Immortality, our Nature so much desires, and longs for with so great an Inquietude. A wonderful Effect of the Inexhaustible *Goodness* of God, and a more Immediate, and lively Warning to us to keep a Vigilant Watch on our Actions, and to regulate them by those Laws of Reason, which God has taught us by Natural Light,

and improv'd, and enforc'd by the clearer Light of the *Goſpel.*

I might here produce a Number of Arguments to prove the Immortality of the Soul. But this being a Demonſtration, I ſhall refer you to the ſeveral Authors, that have wrote upon it; as Dr. *Moor*, Dr. *Bates*, Dr. *Smith*, Sir *Kenelm Digby*, and many more.

Notwithſtanding all you have ſaid (aſſum'd *Pleonexus*) I cannot perſwade my ſelf, that you have demonſtrated the Soul to be Immortal: Your Argument drawn from the Goodneſs, and Juſtice of God, falls to the Ground, if I deny, that you underſtand what the Goodneſs or Juſtice of God is. For, may not what ſeems to us Good, be bad to God? And may not what we think unjuſt, be juſt with God? Is there any Proportion betwixt us? Can a Finite judge of an Infinite, or preſcribe him Laws of Goodneſs and Juſtice?

Beſides, I confeſs to you, that I have very great Doubts, whether I have any Soul at all diſtinct from the Body? And if ſo, the Evidence of your Eyes, and daily Experience, will bear no manner of Arguing upon. For we ſee the Body Periſh every Day, and if the Soul be only the Life, as a Learned Gentleman of the Faculty of Phyſicians, has lately prov'd in his Book of *Second Thoughts of the Soul.* If the Soul be no more, and our thinking Subſtance is diſſipated in our Corporeal, let me tell you, it affords a ſtrong Preſumption, that when we Die, there is an end of us for all Eternity. I know the Doctor ſays indeed, we are to riſe again, and be Judg'd, and ſo our Bodies Tranſported to Heaven or Hell: But if I think his Arguments for that weaker, than for the Mortality of the Soul, I

muſt beg his Pardon if I believe one, and not the other.

I do not at all wonder (replied *Chriſtophil*) that you are not convinc'd, it is ſaid, *that when Reaſon is againſt us, we will be againſt Reaſon.* The Belief of the Soul's Immortality wou'd perhaps diſturb you in the blind Purſuit of your Paſſions, and therefore you choſe rather to ſhut your Eyes to the cleareſt Light, than quit ſo Brutal a Chaſe.

As for your Objection about our knowledge of Goodneſs, and Juſtice, and whether we have the ſame as God, *&c.* it is too trifling to be anſwer'd. For, do you know, that you your ſelf are, have a Being, and talk to me on this very Point in Diſpute; if we are certain of that, I think I have thence prov'd by a certain, and inſeparable Chain of Conſequences, the Exiſtence of a firſt Cauſe, and a knowledge of his Attributes, not at leaſt contradictory to their Reality, nay, adequate to them, in their Nature, tho' not in their Extent, which is Infinite in Perfection, which alters not the Nature of Goodneſs, and Juſtice, but ſtrengthens, and renders them more ſtrong, and active; and by Conſequence confirms the force of my Argument in Proportion to the Infinite Perfection of theſe Divine Attributes.

In ſhort, to Anſwer your firſt Objection, I refer you to a Reflection on all I have ſaid of the Proof of a Deity; and ſince you were not Witneſs of what I ſaid of the Attributes of God, I will now repeat it, to convince you, if poſſible, of ſo weak an Error?

I inſiſt not, (interrupted *Pleonexus*) ſo much on that, as to deſire you to repeat what you have ſaid already; but I will, rather than

give you that Trouble, ſuppoſe that you have Eſtabliſh'd the Divine Attributes beyond Contradiction, yet it does not follow, that my laſt Difficulty is reſolv'd; which muſt remain till you have Anſwer'd Dr. C——'s Book.

The Uſe, which you have made of his Doctrine (replied *Chriſtophil*) ſeems to me what the Author aim'd at. For what other Motive cou'd engage him on ſo extraordinary a Subject? I cannot think he wrote the Book without any Deſign at all, for that would be unworthy ſo great a Philoſopher as he ſeems to deſire to paſs for. And I defie him, and all his Fautors to give a better, and more evident Motive for it.

His Doctrine of the Mortality of the Soul, or that we have indeed no Soul at all, can be of no Advantage to Mankind, no Service to his Country, or Pleaſure, or Uſe to Good Men, nor indeed, any Excuſe to the Bad, ſince he owns a Reſurrection, and gives all to the Body, which Religion attributes to the Soul; holding a Life and Death Eternal after this general Reſurrection of the Body. For all his ſuppos'd Interval of *Non-Entity* will be but as a Moment's Nap to this reviving Mortal Soul or Body; and ſo comes to the ſame thing, as if the Doctor's Book had never been written, and his extraordinary Notions had never coſt him ſo much Pains and Labour to ſend them abroad into the World. So that here appears, at leaſt, no Motive worthy a Man of Senſe to Publiſh two or three Books upon a Subject of no uſe, to free us from a receiv'd Doctrine of no Prejudice, but univerſal Good to Mankind.

Now

Now 'tis certain, that thoſe Opinions (ſuppoſing the Immortality of the Soul but barely an Opinion) which aim at the Good and Happineſs of Mankind, and perfectly agree with the Goodneſs, and Power of God, are certainly the more reaſonable; but to oppoſe the more reaſonable Opinion, with a ſuppoſitious Diſcovery, that can have no End but what is Prejudicial to the Humane Happineſs, is an Undertaking very much unworthy a Lover of either God, or Man.

But he will ſay, the Diſcovery of a Truth, whether pleaſing or diſpleaſing, is a Task worthy a Philoſopher. I anſwer perhaps, it may, but then this Philoſopher ought to be abſolutely ſure, that it is a Truth, nay, he ought to demonſtrate it beyond the poſſibility of a Contradiction, elſe it will amount to no more, than a bare *Probability*; and then this dangerous and diſagreeable Diſcovery is at beſt but on an equal Foot with the contrary Opinion, I mean, as to its evidence; and therefore of two Probabilities, 'tis moſt agreeable to our Nature, and to our Reaſon, to chooſe the moſt pleaſing, and moſt uſeful, and ſo all he has ſaid is of no Force, or Validity.

But to bring his Opinion even to amount to a Probability, he muſt prove, that Matter and Motion can think, that he is perfectly acquainted with all thoſe Properties of the Mind, which the reſt of Mankind with the higheſt Penetration, cannot diſcover; and that he has from thence drawn certain Marks of the Soul's Mortality.

On the contrary, I have prov'd, that there is an evident Diſtinction between the Properties of the Soul, and the Body, and ſuch as bear no reſemblance to each other, ſo as

to give us the leaſt Grounds to ſuſpect, that they are of a Nature, and thence prov'd, that the Periſhing of the Diviſible Body, is no Proof of the Diſſipation of the Indiviſible Soul. Which remains in ſo full force, that all his weak Attempts at Philoſophy will never be able to ſurmount.

But I need ſay no more of theſe Books, malevolent in their Deſign, and I think, weak in the Performance, ſince Dr. *Smith*, in his Book, call'd *Evidence of things not ſeen*, has Fully, Ingeniouſly, and Learnedly Confuted theſe ill-grounded Errors. And no unprejudic'd Reader but muſt own, that there is a Candour, Reaſon, and Learning in the Divine, which the Iniquity of the Argument denied the Phyſician.

But the boldeſt Attempt of this Gentleman, was, his quitting his Philoſophical Arguments for Proofs of Scripture, which is full of the contrary Aſſertions, where the Soul and Body are every where diſtinguiſh'd. But to Inſtance only in two Places, one in the Old, and the other in the New-Teſtament. *Eccl.* 12. 7. *Then ſhall the Duſt return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit to God, who gave it.* Matth. 10. 28. *Fear not them, who Kill the Body, but are not able to Kill the Soul, but rather Fear Him, who is able to Deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell.*

Theſe two are ſo plain, and ſo extreamly evident, that it is impoſſible to evade them without the laſt Force, and Conſtraint, or by abſolutely denying the New and Old Teſtament.

But I refer you to the fore-mention'd Book for a full, and reaſonable Satisfaction, if I have not given it you.

For

For my part (ſaid *Philalethes*) I ſhould oppoſe the Evident Truth, and the perfect Conviction of my own Reaſon, if I had the leaſt doubt of the Soul's Immortality. Nor would I quit this Conviction for all the Pleaſures of Mankind in this World. Now it ſeems worth ones while to take care of ones Conduct, and to ſet a Guard on our Paſſions, ſince we are to reap an Eternal Beneſit of it. O God! how wonderful doſt thou now ſeem to me! How Amiable in thy Goodneſs! And how Bounteous in thy Power! O *Chriſtophil*! I count my ſelf happy in your Acquaintance, and Bleſs the Accidents that brought us together; for from you have I heard things, that fill, and delight my Soul. You have Painted the Charms, and Beauties of Truth, and given us a Proſpect of that happy State, that Man was firſt made in, and ſhown how happy he might yet be, by following thoſe Laws; which God has written in our Hearts, and plac'd in the Eye of our Reaſon. I am ſatisfi'd Things cou'd not be otherwiſe, than they are, unleſs God had made us Machines, that is, without Reaſon, or Liberty. For, if we were to be made Rational Creatures, we muſt have Liberty, elſe Reaſon wou'd be of no Uſe, and if we were Free Agents, every one muſt Act as he thinks fit. That God has taken all the Meaſures, that Infinite Wiſdom ſaw conſiſtent with our Natures, to incline our Appetites to Good, and to Eſtabliſh us happy too here in this Life; as fixing a Neceſſity of Virtue in our Subſiſtence, and ſetting ſuch Evident Marks of Diſtinction of Good, and Evil, that our Reaſon cou'd never miſtake them. And added a Reward for the doing our Du-

ty,

ty, that is, he does Reward our Endeavours at our own Happineſs. O wonderful Effect of Infinite Goodneſs! O Immenſe Extent of Divine Love! My Soul is tranſported with the Thought, and all other things ſeem to me irkſom, or at leaſt, not worth my Purſuit. My Heart is eager for the fuller Enjoyment of this Bleſſed Eternity, and it ſeems long to me till it begin.

The Heart of Man (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) ſeems indeed unſatisfied with all that this World can afford, and the moſt fortunate amidſt his full Enjoyments, is ſtill purſuing more; which looks as if nothing cou'd ſatisfie the Humane Mind, but Infinity in the Fruition of God himſelf, who made it. And to what end ſhould (as I have ſaid) God fix ſuch a boundleſs, ſuch an unaſie, and ſo inſatiable a Deſire in Man, but with a deſign of affording it Satisfaction. The Eye is not ſatisfied with Seeing, nor the Ear with Hearing, and therefore *God*, (who has given us the ſame Demonſtration of our Soul's Immortality, that he has of his own Exiſtence) *prepar'd for them, that love Him, and keep his Commandments, what has not enter'd into the Heart of Man to Imagine.* Which is to ſay, ſomething Vaſt, ſomething Wonderful; for the Humane Imagination is almoſt of an unbounded Extent, and by a ſort of Creation, forms various Beings, and Worlds, not viſible to Corporeal Eyes, and propoſes Joys beyond, and above the Power of all Sublunary things to afford.

I think, *Pleonexus*, if you are not convinc'd, if you are not ſatisfied of this Particular, I ſhou'd Labour in vain to effect what you are reſolv'd not to believe, tho' an Angel from Heaven were to come to aſſure you. For

even

even then you wou'd Evade it, and pretend it might be an Illuſion of Fancy, and no real Apparition. And the ſame Excuſe you might make at the reviving of the Dead, you might ſuppoſe it a Jugle, and be no more touch'd with it, than the *Jews* in general were by the Courſe of our Saviour's Miracles. The The Great Men, and the Rich Men, were too fond of their Power, and their Intereſt, to liſten to any thing, that wou'd Perſwade them from from it, and we find but one *Nicodemus* in all the *Goſpel*.

In my Opinion, (affirm'd *Philalethes*) you have given us Proof enough of this Point, ſince the Sum of it is, that this muſt be believ'd, or we muſt deny a God; for, by denying his Attributes, or ſuppoſing him to Act contrary to his Attributes, is to deny a God. I wiſh therefore, that you wou'd proceed thro' the Law of Nature, to that of *Chriſt*; for, the Satisfaction I have found in what you have already ſaid, gives me reſtleſs Deſire to hear what yet remains; that being at once deliver'd from the fluctuating State of Uncertainty, I may once for all fix in a happy Security, which no Fortune, nor any Chance can deſtroy.

Chriſtophil finding *Pleonexus* uneaſie at the Expectation of a further Diſcourſe on theſe Serious Affairs, to humour his Malady as much as poſſible, by that to render him more Docile, propos'd to take either a Walk in the Neighbouring Fields, or elſe to go on Horſeback, or in his Coach, to ſee ſome of the Gentlemen of that Country. *Pleonexus* was extreamly Pleas'd at the Propoſal, and *Philalethes* was entirely devoted to what *Chriſtophil* thought convenient, not at all doubting

ing but that he had his Ends in the Motion, and thoſe very good, and reaſonable.

They therefore took Coach, and *Chriſtophil* order'd the Coachman to Drive to a Miniſter's Houſe, of the next Pariſh, where he Promis'd *Pleonexus*, he wou'd find himſelf Diverted with a homely Entertainment, in a Houſe not likely to offend him with its Magnificence. *Pleonexus*, who was Indifferent whither he went, provided this irkſome Diſcourſe were broke off, ſeem'd Pleas'd with *Chriſtophil*'s Account of the Entertainment they were like to find, and deſir'd him to give him a Character of the Perſon, who was Maſter of it.

Chriſtophil, who knew that he ſhou'd arrive there by that time he had finiſh'd his Character, which he Imagin'd wou'd not be in all things agreeable to him, bid him look out of the Coach to the bottom of the Hill they were on, and there he might ſee the Manſion they were going to. Which having done, he ſaw in a pleaſing Valley, a little Village on the Margin of a winding River, and near the Church, a little plain Houſe, that at that little Diſtance ſhow'd abundance of Neatneſs, and a good Situation. There, ſaid *Chriſtophil*, lives *Chriſtophorus*, the Perſon you enquire after, who has been Miniſter of this Place about Forty Years, that is, ever ſince he was Five and Twenty; for he had no ſooner taken Orders, but I Preſented him to this Living. I was not deceiv'd in the Man, for as his younger Days diſcover'd abundance of Good Senſe, and Learning, as well as Honeſty, and uncommon Piety; for, I cou'd never yet, nor any other Gentleman of the Country perſwade him, either to exchange it for a Better,

ter, or to accept of a Plurality. He us'd always to ſay, that he thought the Cure of Souls of one Pariſh enough for one Man, if he diſcharg'd his Duty well, and that a Miniſter ought not to aim at getting Eſtates by the Goſpel; he thank'd God, that he had enabled him to bring up his Family with that, in Honeſty, and Religion, and tho' it was pretty Numerous in both Sexes, he had now liv'd to ſee them all happily provided for in honeſt Trades, and ſuitable Matches.

He has (continued *Chriſtophil*) by his Zeal, and his good Example, reduc'd this from the moſt Litigious, and Unchriſtian Place in the whole Country to a perfect Honeſty, and to live like one Family; the Attorneys have quite forſaken it, out of Deſpair of any Advantage, while *Chriſtophorus* lives, who on all Accidents of Debate, is perpetually the Umpire, and never fail'd to Pleaſe both Parties.

Here are now no Beggars, nor ſtarving Wretches, as there were when he came; he has ſtirr'd up the Charity of the Rich, and the Induſtry of the Poor, ſo that, they know not what Neceſſity means. His Church is always full, nor is there a Diſſenter in his Pariſh. His Sermons are Plain, and Moral, directed to make his People Good Chriſtians, not nice Criticks in Controverſial Divinity. In ſhort, he Preaches what they underſtand, and that makes his Hearers reduce it to Practice; ſo that I may truly ſay, he is belov'd by God and Man.

As for himſelf, and his own Family, there is always a Chearful Holineſs, nothing ſtarch'd, nothing formal, no marks of Hypocriſie, but Diverſify'd with Innocent Mirth, and Diverſions, ſerious Studies, and daily Prayers.

I wiſh

I wish (said *Philalethes*) there were more *Christophorus's* in the Nation, they would soon heal our Divisions, and unite us like your Village. I am apt to think, (reply'd *Christophil*) that they are not so scarce as the Malice of their Enemies wou'd suppose, who being to deceive the People, run them down with an outward Face of Sanctimony, but not with Christian Humility, Love, true Piety enough. But this is a Point I shall not enter into; and now you find, we are arriv'd at our little Bower of Bliss. He shall show you the Ornaments of the Inside himself.

THE

THE

Fifth DISCOURSE

OF THE

LAW of NATURE.

THE Coach no ſooner ſtop'd, but the good Miniſter was ready to receive, and conduct them in, where nothing was to be ſeen but Neatneſs, and Convenience. None of the Elegance of Building, or Furniture; what was Neceſſary ſeem'd ſufficient for a happy Life.

After a Chearful Welcome, *Chriſtophil* deſir'd to ſee his Library, to which they aſcended by a ſmall Stair-caſe into a handſome, and larger Room, than that Houſe ſeem'd to afford, Furniſh'd with a handſome Collection of Books in all Sciences, tho' chiefly in Divinity: This was the nobleſt Entertainment, he knew, that he could give *Chriſtophil*, and a Feaſt where he often Indulg'dhimſelf to an Intellectual Luxury.

This was a Repaſt which was not very agreeable to *Pleonexus*, who took more Delight in Baggs, than in Books, which *Chriſtophil* obſerving hy his apparent uneaſineſs, addreſs'd himſelf to him in this manner.

I find,

I find, (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) that the Frugality, which the other Part of this Houſe gave you not more Pleaſure, than the Richneſs of this, for here is Money thrown away, *Pleonexus*, on things ſuperfluous, in your Opinion.

I am not ſuch an Enemy to Books Sir, (reply'd *Pleonexus*) as to think, that they are of no uſe; I have ſome my ſelf, I have the great *Hobbs of Malmsbury*, *Spinoſa*, the *Guide to a Juſtice of Peace*, and ſeveral Law-Books, that are for the Information of my Conduct. I have ſome too for Diverſion, as the *Pilgrim's Progreſs*, *Herberts*, with *Quarle*'s Poems, and the like. But to make a Bookſeller's Shop of my Houſe, I can ſee no Reaſon, unleſs I cou'd ſell them to good Advantage, and methinks this Gentleman might have made better Uſe of his Money, for the Benefit of his Family.

I thank God, Sir, (anſwer'd *Chriſtophorus*) and my Benefactors, I have provided for my Family, and have never wanted my ſelf, ſince my good Patron here, Preſented me to this Living; I have enjoy'd all the Innocent, that is, all the reaſonable Delights, that the Richeſt can pretend to; for I have chearfully made uſe of what I Poſſeſs'd, in providing for my own, and ſerving my Neighbour; and what Money I had to ſpare, deſigning neither Hoarding, nor Uſury, I laid out in Books, to render my ſelf the fitter for the execution of my Miniſterial Function. They came in by degrees, and many Years addition has ſwell'd them to ſome Bulk. But you muſt know, Sir, that I have been oblig'd to the Bounty of many Gentlemen, who have contributed to the compleating my Library. Among which is now a ſmall Treatiſe of Mr *Hobbs*'s, Preſented me

not

not long ago, with a Deſire, that I wou'd Peruſe, and Anſwer. And that is his *Tripos*, particularly his Treatiſe in it of Humane Nature, and *de Corpore Politico*.

And have you, Sir, (interrupted *Pleonexus*) made any Progreſs in your Anſwer. I have not ſo much as begun it, (reply'd *Chriſtophorus*) having but lately Perus'd it to that End; for I had read ſo much of Mr. *Hobbs* in my Younger Days, that I knew there was no wonderful Diſcoveries in him, or any larger proportion of Reaſon, than his Neighbours, tho' he ſets up for Singularity in moſt of what he has Wrote, which requir'd a larger ſhare of Evidence, and ſtrength of Reaſoning, than I cou'd ever perſwade my ſelf, that he was Maſter of.

You read Sir, I fear, (ſaid *Pleonexus*) with Prejudice, elſe you cou'd never think ſo little of a Man, the whole *Engliſh* World ſo loudly applauds. Is there a Man of Wit in the Town but keeps him by him as a Treaſure, and is as Perfect in him as you in your *Bible*?

I am not to be Govern'd by Vogue (reply'd *Chriſtophorus*) which is generally in the wrong; as we find by the Extravagant Succeſs ſome Authors have had for a time, that have afterwards ſunk in the Opinion of their Fautors, and grown the Contempt of all Men beſide. And tho' this be not yet Mr. *Hobbs*'s Fate, 'tis not owing to his Merits, but to the Principles he has advanc'd, on which the

Criminal Indulgence of the Paſſions are built with all the Security, Men willing to be deceiv'd can deſire; for as they tend directly to *Atheiſm*, ſo they naturally diſſolve all the Bands of *Morality*, and *Religion*, which is ſo agreeable to the young *Wou'd-be-Wits*, and Debochees, that 'tis no wonder his Works are not ſunk yet; but the frequent Confutations the Learned Clergy, and others of our Church have, and do give him, muſt in time make them aſham'd of ſo baffl'd an Inſtructor.

Every ſide (interrupted *Pleonexus*) Triumphs, tho' every ſide is not the Vanquiſher; but as I can find nothing but Magnificent Expreſſions of the Deity in him, ſo can I not find, that he has been ſo baffled, particulary in one Point, which is perfectly his own Diſcovery, and that is, that Mankind are naturally in a State of War; how well has he fortifi'd this new Diſcovery with Reaſon? If you pretend to be a Man, ſubmit to Reaſon; if you are a Proteſtant, allow us the Submiſſion to the Convictions of your Reaſon; or plainly tell us, that in quitting the *Romiſh* Church, we only chang'd the Tyrant, not the Tyranny, and in throwing off the Implicit Faith in the *Pope*, and his Councils, we muſt have it now in our Parſons, and National Synods, or Convocations.

With Submiſſion, Sir, (replied *Chriſtophorus*) I may allow, that there may be ſome favourable Expreſſions of God in Mr. *Hobbs*, and the

the old *Epicureans* abound in the ſame; but when the Principles he lays down are deſtructive of the Exiſtence of a God, thoſe who are willing to have it ſo, eaſily diſtinguiſh betwixt formal and empty Words, and the Force and Energy of an Argument.

Next, Sir, if you have not known him to be Baffled in all his Arguments, it is becauſe you have been ſo Partial, as not to read his Oponents, nay, even this magnify'd Piece of his which you ſeem ſo fond of, has been entirely Confuted by Biſhop *Parker*, and others, beyond the Poſſibility of a fair Reply. So that, Sir, you need not have been ſo very ſevere on the Church, which does deſire no ſuch Implicit Faith, as you ſeem to apprehend, ſhe deſires you only to exert your unbiaſs'd Reaſon, and be her Enemy if you can. And ſince you are ſuch an Aſſerter of Reaſon, I hope you will ſubmit to its Deciſion, even againſt your Great Mr. *Hobbs*, elſe you pay him that Implicit Faith, you are ſo afraid the Church ſhould demand of you. Here is the Book, I deſire you wou'd turn to the ſtreſs of his Argument, and I ſhall endeavour to ſhow you how contrary it is to Reaſon.

That you'll find a harder Task, than you Imagin'd, reply'd *Pleonexus*, (taking the Book) here's the Place; the firſt Chapter of his *De Corpore Politico*. Which when he had read, *Chriſtophorus* began.

Mr. *Hobbs* here, leſt we ſhou'd think Mankind

the Work of an Infinite Goodneſs, and Wiſdom, ſuppoſes a State of Man, which never was, or ever could be *in eſſe*, or Reality; he diſſolves all the Natural Ties of Father, Children, and Relations, which muſt neceſſarily have been, and ſpread themſelves over Mankind from their Riſe, unleſs he wou'd ſuppoſe Men ſprung from the Earth like Muſhrooms in the Night, or from the Dragon's Teeth, and ſo naturally fall to Fighting, without knowing why; every one againſt one, and every one againſt all; that is, as Biſhop *Parker* obſerves, he muſt ſuppoſe all Mankind Mad, to ſuppoſe, that any ſuch State of Nature ever was. Nor is there, indeed, any ſuch Malignant Principle in Man, as his Speculations ſuppoſe, which is not to be guided by any Law, or Precept of Reaſon, or Juſtice, we find the contrary every Day.

Another Abſurdity he ſuppoſes, that is, that if he that was ſtrongeſt ſubdu'd him that was weakeſt, and ſo oblig'd him to be his Dependant, or Slave, the Conqueror had a Right over the Subdu'd, and his Fidelity and Service, but he gives no Reaſon but an Aſſertion, *that Power is Right*; which if ſo, then the Weaker has no longer the Right of the Conqueror, till by Stratagem, or otherwiſe, he delivers himſelf from him, tho' by the Death of his Vanquiſher, the Weaker having as much Right, (*viz.* Power) to his Conqueror's *Life*, as he had to his Liberty. This is a pretty Diſtinction of *Right* indeed, when every Man's Selfiſh, and Animal Paſſions

ſions are to be Judges of it; for it Juſtifies all Robberies, Thefts, and Murthers, that the moſt wicked of Men can be guilty of: For if there were a time, when all things were Lawful, and the Strongeſt ſhou'd by Right, take all, it is ſtill in Force; for, what was Right once, is, and muſt be Right always, eſpecially ſpeaking of the Univerſal Right in the Law of Nature, which always did, and always will reach all Mankind.

But Mr. *Hobbs*, and his Followers, ſhou'd not ſuppoſe, that all Men are ſo fond of Fighting, as he wou'd have them by this whimſical Suppoſition: Some, nay moſt wou'd be willing to have a Reaſon for it, as well as a Probability of Succeſs, but ſo unproportion'd a War, as one againſt all cou'd propoſe no ſhadow of a hope of Victory. All are not *Almanzors*, or Bullies, to quarrel with all they meet, on I know not what Compariſons, nor are all Men ſo blindly led by their Paſſions: as to have no Regard at all to themſelves, or others, their unhappineſs, or ſafety, or that of their Neighbours, Relations, or Friends. Nay, ſuppoſe them to love none but themſelves, they wou'd be more cautious, than to fall into the Confuſion of ſo mad and general a War, ſuch a higgle piggle of Blows. He muſt allow, that Man was always a Rational Creature, and ever endu'd with Self-Love, and the Principle of Self-Preſervation, and therefore, that they always us'd all imaginable Caution to obtain an End ſo deſir'd; for they cou'd never reaſon on this Point, and be in ſo confus'd, and

mad a State, as that of War, in Mr. *Hobbs*'s Senſe, or ſhow when, and how this Principle, which every Man now finds in himſelf, had its Riſe, when begun, and how ſpread through the whole Race, without any apparent Cauſe, or Neceſſity more now, than at the Beginning.

The Inſtances, and Examples he gives of the Barbarous Nations now, and our *German* Anceſtors, are abſolutely falſe; for there is no Nation, nor ever cou'd have been, how ſmall ſoever, without a Regular Government, and certain Laws written, or unwritten. And *Tacitus* will ſufficiently convince him of his Error in his quotation of our *German* Anceſtors.

But if we allow, as we neceſſarily muſt, that Mankind had a Progreſſive Beginning, that we were born of our Parents, they of theirs, and ſo on till we come to ſome firſt Parents, made immediately by the Hand of God, out of Nothing, or out of the Earth, it entirely deſtroys his *State of War*; for the Ties of Relation, the Mutual Love of Children, and Parents, Brothers, and Siſters, Wives, and Husbands, with the Conſaguinities, and Friendſhips contracted by thoſe Conjunctions, united Men into Families firſt, and then ſpread to larger Extent in common Intereſt, and Reciprocal Kindneſs; which cou'd never be ſo in a Moment diſſolv'd, but by ſome Frantick Diſeaſe, that running like an Irreſiſtible Plague over all Mankind, ſhou'd, I will not ſay perſwade, but compel them to

quit

quit their Safety, and Peace, for Insecurity, Danger, and Disquiet.

But if this suppos'd State of Nature never was, or ever cou'd have been in *rerum Natura*, to what serves so mad a Supposition? Does it give a better Foundation of the *Rational* Principles of all Mankind? No,—it on the contrary destroys their Force, and by consequence removes all the Virtues from *Certainty* to meer *Opinion*, depriving them of their solid Foundation in the very Nature of God, and Man, that is, in the Necessities of Humane Society, and so in the Deity, who is its Benificent Author.

The Truth of the Story is (as far we can gather from the Cause, from the Effect) Mr. *Hobbs* had a Mind to set up for the Head of a Party, and being to touch on a Point so often, and so well handled by others, disdain'd to tread in so plain, so evident, and so common a Path, but chose rather to leave Truth, and wander after Plausible Errors of Wild Opinion, and Fancy, than to give his Disciples nothing new to distinguish themselves by; and as all Men else, at least, in our Modern Enquiries appeal to Reason, he was for setting up his own Authority against the common Reason of all Mankind. This, I say, by the Dictates of *Christian* Charity, supposing that his Aim was not infinitely more Criminal.

But Sir, as you have seen a *Christian* Philo-

ſopher declare for a *Chance*, or confus'd Original of the Law of Nature, give me leave to ſhow you the Reaſoning of a Heathen on the ſame Head. It is *Cicero* that I mean, in his Book, *de Legibus*, the Subject of Mr. *Hobbs*'s Book; and when I have done that, I will lend you Biſhop *Parker*'s full and large Confutation of the *Mamlsbury* Syſtem, which was too long to dwell on here.

We have (interrupted *Philalethes*) accidentally fallen on a Subject, which *Chriſtophil* has Promis'd to Diſcourſe of this Evening, in purſuance of a Deſign, which he has very happily begun. For he has paſs'd through the Proof of a Deity, demonſtrated his Providence, given a Rational Account of his Attributes, and prov'd the Immortality of the Soul, in order to the Proof of the Law of Nature, and the Chriſtian Religion. For indeed, without the Immortality of the Soul, all the other Enquiries wou'd prove but Painful Amuſements, if I may ſoften it with ſo mild a Word, and not rather call them the higheſt of Torments the Mind of Man is capable of.

I ſhall readily (reply'd *Chriſtophorus*) thus render the Diſpute into ſuch good Hands, and will only in a few Words offer the Subſtance of what *Cicero* ſays on the Head, I have touch'd upon, which may perhaps give a juſt occaſion to the Riſe of his Diſcourſe.

It is, what you would much better Proſecute, (ſaid *Chriſtophil*) but ſince you know not the

the Method I have taken, I will proceed, with this Deſire, that when you have any thing to add, either on the Law of Nature, or the *Chriſtian Religion*, you will be ſo free, as to ſupport my Argument by your help.

I ſhall Sir (purſu'd *Chriſtophorus*) obſerve your Directions. And not to delay your Intention, I ſhall be as quick in my Diſpatch of *Cicero* as poſſible.

In ſhort therefore, he has Recourſe to the Providence of God, and the Natural Reaſon of Man, for the true Riſe and Spring of the *Law of Nature*. But hear him ſpeak after *Pomponius Atticus* has allow'd him, that the World is Govern'd by Providence.

'Proceed, ſays *Atticus*, for I long to hear 'to what End the Conceſſion I have made, 'is directed. I will not (replies *Cicero*) keep 'you longer in ſuſpenſe, for this is the Aim 'of that *Poſtulatum*. This Provident, Sagacious, Manifold, Acute Animal, endu'd 'with Memory, and full of Reaſon, and 'Counſel, which we call *Man*, is Form'd, 'and Produc'd by the Supream Deity, on 'ſome Noble aud Excellent Condition, and 'with an Aim worthy the *Cauſe*, and the '*Effect*. This Humane Animal is the only 'ſingle Being among all that vaſt Variety of 'Kinds and Natures of Living Creatures, 'that participates of *Reaſon*, and *Thought*, 'while the reſt are all deſtitute of them. 'But what is there, I will not ſay in Man, 'or in all the Earth, or in the Heavens,

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'more Divine, than *Reaſon*? Which obtains juſtly the Name of *Wiſdom*, when it grows up, and ripens to its Perfection. But ſince there is nothing more Excellent in *Man*, or God, than *Reaſon*; *Reaſon* is the firſt Alliance, and Commerce betwixt *God* and *Man*. But thoſe who have *Reaſon*, have alſo *Right Reaſon* in common, which being the *Law*; Men are aſſociated, or united with God, by the *Law*. But thoſe who have one common Law, have alſo one common *Right*, and who have one common *Right*, are to be Eſteem'd Fellow-Citizens of the ſame City. If therefore they are obedient to the ſame Command, Empire, and Power, much more will they ſubmit to this Cœleſtial Rule, to the *Divine Mind*, *and the all Powerful God*: Hence all this Univerſe, this whole World is to be judg'd one common City of the Gods, and Men: And as in Cities the States of, and Degrees of Families are diſtinguiſh'd by a certain Rule (of which I ſhall Diſcourſe in its proper Place) ſo in Dividing the ſeveral Claſſes, and Degrees of Beings of the Univerſe, it will be ſo much the more Magnificent, and Noble, for Man to find himſelf Plac'd in the Alliance and Family of the Gods.

'For in our Enquiries into the Syſtem of Nature, the Proſecution of the Argument generally brings it to this (and what is there Argu'd, is as it is Argu'd) That by the Perpetual Courſes, and Revolutions of the Heavens, there was a certain Matter, or Seed of Mankind produc'd, which be-

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'ing caſt, and ſown on the Earth, was 'enlarg'd, or exalted by the Divine 'Gift of Souls. And though Man had 'aſſum'd all things elſe, which belong 'to his Nature, from a Mortal Kind, 'which, like their Origin, were frail, 'and fading, yet was his Soul Infus'd 'into him from God; whence we may 'derive a Kindred to the Cœleſtial Pow-'ers, and may be term'd their Kind, or 'Progeny.

'This is the Reaſon that no other Animal 'but Man has any Notion of God, but there 'is no Nation of Mankind, however Barba-'rous, or Savage, that is not ſenſible they 'ought to have ſome God, tho' they are 'Ignorant what kind of God.

'Again, Man has a Commerce with God 'in Virtue, which no other Creature has; 'but Virtue is nothing elſe but the high-'eſt Perfection of a Rational Nature. Man 'therefore has a Likeneſs to God: So 'that what greater, what nearer Kindred, or 'Relation can there be to the Deity? For 'this Reaſon Nature has furniſh'd, and 'beſtow'd on them for their Uſe and Con-'venience, ſo vaſt a Plenty, ſo remarka-'ble an Abundance; that it is plain, that 'the Numerous Products of the Earth, 'the Water and the Air, are the Gift 'of Providence, not Chance. And this 'is not only Evident in the Fruits of 'the Earth, but in the Beaſts, of which 'ſome are evidently Deſign'd, or Point-

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'ed out and made for Uſe, ſome for the 'Advantage, and ſome for the Food of Man-'kind. Nature has likewiſe Invented for us 'innumerable Arts; and Reaſon imitating 'Nature, has, with wonderful Addreſs, fur-'niſh'd Life with all things neceſſary for 'its comfortable, and pleaſing Subſiſtence.

'This ſame Nature has not only adorn'd 'Man with a quick, vivacious Motion of 'Mind, but added the Senſes, as Senti-'nels, and Spies; and laid open to our 'View, the obſcure, but neceſſary Notices 'of moſt things, as the Foundation of 'Science, or Knowledge, and fitted and 'adapted the Figure of the Body to the 'Genius, and Nature of the Mind. For 'when ſhe had made the reſt of the Ani-'mals with a prone, and downward Bent, 'meerly for Food, ſhe gave Man an E-'rected Look, and by that excited him to 'behold the Heavens, as its Kindred, and 'Ancient Houſe. Then ſhe has Drawn, 'and plainly Painted the hidden Man-'ners in the Countenance. For the Lo-'quacious Eyes diſcover the Affections of 'the Mind, and the Face, the Manners 'and Inclinations, which cannot be form'd 'in any other living Creature. I ſhall 'paſs over the Aptneſs, and the Addreſs 'of the other Parts of the Body, the 'Formation of the Voice, and the Effi-'cacy of Speech, which is the greateſt 'Engagement of Humane Society. Now, 'becauſe God has Created, and Adorn'd 'Man'

'Man, as the firſt, and chief of all Beings, it is evident, that his Nature can by it ſelf and its own Force, make a farther Progreſs, than any of the Reſt. For his Nature by it ſelf Confirms, and Perfects Reaſon, by proceeding from thoſe things whoſe Kinds it knows, in the firſt Reflection, or Ideas of the Mind. How remotely have you run (ſays *Atticus*) for the Principles of *Civil Law*, but in ſo agreeable a manner, that I am not at all Sollicitous about, what theſe things were Introduc'd for, but cou'd be very well ſatisfi'd, that you ſpent the Day on this very Point; for theſe things ſeem to me of greater Conſequence, and more Noble, than thoſe for which you Prepare the Way by theſe Contemplations. I confeſs (reply'd *Cicero*) what I have juſt touch'd Curſorily in this Diſcourſe, are things of Moment. But that of the greateſt Conſequence among all the Diſputes of the Learned, is perhaps that, which Demonſtrates our being Born for the Practice of Juſtice; and, *That Right is not Founded in Opinion, but in Nature.*

'This will appear more Evident, if you Conſider'd the Humane Conjunction, and Society. For there is no one thing ſo like another, as we are all like one another. So that if the Depravity of Cuſtoms, and the Variety of Opinions, did not Reach the Weakneſs of our Minds, and keep them to that Bent, they had firſt given them, no Man wou'd be more

'Uni-

'Uniform to himself, than every Man to 'every Man in the Universe. The same 'Definition therefore of Man, reaches, and 'fits the whole Kind; which makes it evident, 'that there is no general Distinction. 'For Reason, in which alone, we Excell 'the Brutes, which helps our Conjectures, 'by which we Argue, Confute, Examine, 'Form, and Conclude, is common to all 'of us; we differ in the Doctrines, but 'are alike in the Faculty of Learning, 'or Understanding; for all the same things 'are Comprehended by our Souls; and 'the same things, that move the Senses 'of one, affect those of all Men. And 'those Images, or Ideas which are Imprint-'ed in the Mind of one, as the first Notices 'of things, are in like manner Imprinted 'in the Minds of *All*. Thus in Speech, 'which is the Interpreter of the Mind, 'all Men agree in the Meaning, though 'they differ in the Sounds, or Words. '*Nor is there any one, of what Nation so-'ever, who cannot, by following the Dictates 'of Nature, arrive at Virtue.*

'But this Similitude of Mankind to each 'other, does not only hold in good Deeds, 'but is as Remarkable in Bad. All are 'caught by Pleasure; which, tho' it be 'the Bait of Wickedness, has some sort 'of appearance of a *Natural Good*; for it 'contains something of Lenity, and Sweet-'ness. By the same common Ignorance, 'all fly from Death, as the Dissolution 'of

'of Nature; and Life is desird, because 'it contains us in that Condition, or 'State that we are Born in. *Grief*, or *Pain*, 'is by all esteem'd the greatest *Evil*, both 'because of that Sharpness, and Sting, 'that it has in its own Nature, and be-'cause the Destruction of Nature seems 'to follow. Troubles, Joys, Desires, Fears, 'Invade the Minds of all Men; nor 'does the Variety of the Opinions of Men 'alter the Matter; for they who Adore 'a Dog, or a Cat for Gods, labour un-'der as great Superstition, as the rest of 'the World. But what Nation is there, 'that does not love Affability, Benignity, 'and Gratitude. What Nation in the 'Universe, does not hate the Proud, 'the Mischievous, the Cruel, and the Un-'grateful?

'Since we find, by what has been said, 'that all Men are alike in what we have 'mention'd, and Knit together in one 'common, and general Society; it fol-'lows, that a right Course, and Method 'of Life, is that which renders some bet-'ter than others. From hence it is plain, '*That all were made Originally Just*, that 'they might Participate one with another, 'and have one general Communcation a-'mong all; but that the Corruption of Evil 'Customs does, as it were, extinguish those 'sparks of Good, first given us by Nature, 'and gives Rise and Confirmation to the

'con-

'contrary Vices. But if Men wou'd, in 'their Judgments, as it is in Nature, 'think all *Humane* Offices their Duty; '*Right* wou'd be equally regarded, and ob-'serv'd by all. For they who have *Rea-'son* given them, have likewise *Right Rea-'son*, and by Consequence *Law*; for the '*Law* is but the *Right Reason* of Command-'ing, or Forbidding; and if *Law*, *Right*. 'But all Men are endu'd with Reason; 'all Men therefore have the Obligations of '*Right*.

I fear I have been too tedious in my Quotation, but I cou'd only here and there, for Brevity sake, leave out some things, as I with Pain, leap over what remains, to conclude with *Atticus*'s Summing up the whole: *Quintus* (*Cicero*'s Brother, who is another Person of the Dialogue) having said, 'That from what he had heard, 'he found, that Right was deriv'd from 'Nature; the same (replies *Atticus*) is 'my Opinion. This is plain, that we are 'first Form'd, and Adorn'd by the Mu-'nificence of the Gods. Secondly, that 'all Men have the same, or like Mode, 'or Form of Living, as to those Particu-'lars, Commemorated by *Cicero*, *And that* '*all are united to one another by a Natural* '*kind of Indulgence, and Benevolence, and* '*a share or Society of Right.*

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By this you may see, that this *Heathen* had a nobler Idea of God and the Humane Nature than Mr. *Hobbs*, and that he attributed the Disorders we now find, to the Corruptions of evil Customs, and only Innocence & mutual Love and to the primitive of Nature before those Customs were form'd by longinquity of Time, and on which only Mr. *Hobbs* has built without the least shadow of Reason, which will yet do him no Service; since there is no arguing from the Corruption of Custom, to the Purity of Nature.

I have done what I propos'd, and now desire you wou'd take up your Argument, according to your former Intention.

For my part (said *Philalethes*) this Heathen, as you call him, satisfies me infinitely more, than what you read out of Mr. *Hobbs*, because more agreeable to Reason, and those Attributes of God which you *Christophil* have already demonstrated.

I have many Objections to make to what *Cicero* has said (assum'd *Pleonexus*) but that it wou'd too long detain *Christophil* from his beloved Argument; and I suppose, we are all satisfy'd in the Justice of the *Law of Nature*; so I shall not raise any scruples in the matter, but shall listen to your Discourse, as to a very agreeable Amusement.

I do not know what Objections you may have (reply'd *Christophil*) against what *Cicero* has advanced; but I am very sure, that if you had consider'd justly, what I have already said of the *Law of Nature*, and right Reason in my former Discourses, you would have found, on how sandy a Foundation Mr. *Hobbs*'s System is built. In my Considerations on the *moral Attributes* of God, in my Vindication of *Providence*, and in

my View of the Properties of the Soul you wou'd find not only the whole Doctrine of the Laws of Nature, but also a demonstration that they were of Divine Institution. However, to recall to your Memory, what you have heard, and in short to repeat what you have not, I shall recapitulate, and lay down the Laws of Nature, deriv'd from their proper Source.

Right Reason, therefore, which we have defin'd, and given you instances and Maxims of, draws with the utmost certainty these Prescripts and Rules, which form the Law of Nature, from the Nature of God, and Man, and they are all comprehended under these three Duties.

(1.) *Our Duty to our selves*,

(2.) *Our Duty to our Neighbour*,

(3.) *And our Duty to God.*

Of each of which I shall speak, with all imaginable Brevity, because, I think, I have said enough of all but the last already, and built them on the most infallible Grounds.

To defer, therefore, the greatest Force of their Sanction by the Divine Authority, till we come to the last of these three Heads, I shall begin with those which are comprehended under *our Duty to our selves*, and show, that they all naturally proceed from that universal Maxim, or Principle, which God has implanted in all Mankind *Self-Love*, or *Self-Preservation*. If I should derive all the other Duties from the same Source, I doubt not but it wou'd appear very reasonable to you all, That we should follow whatever plainly, or probably contributes to our Preserva-

tion,

tion, and to that Love which every Man naturally bears himself. But first of these.

Self love, as *Rochfocault* justly observes, rightly understood, is the Mother of all other Virtues, as it is the Parent of all our Vices, when ill understood. *Self-Love*, therefore, rightly understood, gives us a Desire of *Good*, and an Aversion to *Evil*, that is teaches us to seek Pleasure and Safety, and to shun *Pain* and *Insecurity*; for Pain and Insecurity threaten our Preservation, while safety and pleasure promote it: for Pleasure is the Charm, that renders *Self-Preservation* so engaging. This Principle, therefore, proposes to right Reason to consider and judge of Pleasure and Pain, according to their Nature in their Time, Duration and Degree; whether immediate or distant, probable or certain, greater or less, long or short, corporeal or intellectual, real or imaginary; and how every one of these contribute to or oppose the Safety or Preservation of the Being.

Our *Safety*, therefore, being the first thing that Reason considers in these Enquirys, because *Pleasure* is inconsistent with *Insecurity*, which always begets Fear, and Fear and Joy (without which no Pleasure is) are opposite and almost inconsistent. It first examines into the ways of fortifying *Security*, and defending and blocking up all the Avenues against the Approaches of *Danger*, and *Insecurity*; and by consequence considers which way it may be invaded, and ruin'd, and which way made defensible: And on Reflection, *Right Reason* finds by its own Rules, that our Safety cannot be ruin'd but two several ways, that is From without, or from within our selves. Its care, therefore, is naturally to prevent all domestick Underminings, and treacherous Surrender

of the Fort by our ſelves; and that it does by finding that there is a Neceſſity of thoſe home Securities call'd *Moral Virtues*; which will preſerve us from doing thoſe things, which may make our Bodies or Minds unfit to perform thoſe Offices, for which Nature deſign'd them, and by that means diſappoint our ſelves of that Pleaſure, or continuity of Pleaſures, which make up Happineſs, and which *Self-Love* is born to with ſo vehement an Appetite, and on which the very Soul of *Self-Preſervation* depends: Reaſon therefore declares, that *Temperance* or *Sobriety* is abſolutely neceſſary to this end, in thoſe Pleaſures which regard the Body, and that without this Virtue, it is in vain, that *Wiſdom* or *Prudence* provides againſt Forreign Aſſaults, or that Fortitude or Courage oppoſe or ſupport Extrinſick Accidents; if we cou'd ſuppoſe theſe Virtues to remain in the midſt of corporeal Exceſs, which oppreſſing the Organs of the Body, at the ſame time, renders the Mind incapable of performing her Duty. But where both the Body, and the Mind are depriv'd of their proper Operations, there can be no Pleaſure, ſince the Appetite is dull'd, and the Safety of the whole is endanger'd.

It appears, therefore, that Reaſon deduces from the Principles of *Self-love*, and *Self-preſervation*, that there is a neceſſity of *Sobriety* and *Temperance*; that is, that there muſt be a bounded enjoyment of ſenſual Pleaſures to Secure our Safety, even from our ſelves. Exceſſes in Drinking, unlimited venereal Pleaſures, and Gluttonous Eating debilitate the Body, impair the Health, breed Satiety and Pain, and a manifeſt Inſecurity: Satiety deſtroys thoſe very Pleaſures, Inſecurity deſtroys all; and both, therefore,

therefore, are directly againſt *Self Love* and *Self-Preſervation.*

Thus it is, that Reaſon finds Sobriety and Temperance, to be the Security and ſtrength of Pleaſure in regard to our ſelves, and in relation to the Body.

Let us now conſider, how we our ſelves may deſtroy our own Pleaſures, by the Diſturbance of the Mind. There can be no Pleaſure without Peace of Mind, nor any Peace of Mind without Virtue, that is, a Regulation of the Paſſions by the Rule of Juſtice and Moderation. For to ſuffer the Paſſions, to be often, or always in a Violent Agitation, puts the Mind in a perpetual Tumult, and renders it unfit for the Performance of thoſe Offices it was deſign'd for; and robs it of that Tranquillity and Peace, which are neceſſary for the perfect enjoyment of Pleaſure. For when the Judgment is Fluctuating, and all the Faculties of the Mind confounded (as they muſt be in an arbitrary and conſtant Dominion of the Paſſions) what Taſt or, Reliſh of Satisfaction can the Mind have? Beſides, a perpetual Agitation of the Paſſions in a violent and unbounded manner, diſorders the Body; produces Diſeaſes of immediate and fatal conſequence, which often end in ſudden Death, which is immediately againſt the firſt Principle of Nature *Self-Preſervation.*

Hence Reaſon draws the neceſſity of our reducing our Paſſions into certain Bounds, and of finding out what theſe Bounds are; which on Enquiry it finds to be the *Moral Virtues*, and that when they tranſgreſs theſe, they betray our Pleaſure, and our Safety, undermining them at Home, and provoking their Invaſion from abroad. Thus it is plain, that *Prudence* is neceſſary to

our Preſervation, which the Moraliſts call the firſt Primitive Virtue, and define it thus. *Prudence is a Virtue of the Soul, which has that abſolute ſway over the Paſſions, that it permits not any of their Emotions to hinder the Mind from judging truly, and happily apprehending in her deliberations, what is Abſolutely neceſſary and ſimply the beſt.*

But when *Reaſon*, in the diſcharge of that Truſt, which *Self-Love* confided to it, has found, that our Pleaſure and Safety do not depend on us alone, but that they are in great meaſure, in the Power of others; it conſiders what is the moſt likely way to prevent any Danger from abroad. Reaſon reflects that Man is not a Solitary Creature, that Individuals cannot ſingly Subſiſt, but that a Solitude wou'd not only deprive us of all or moſt part of our Pleaſure (a large ſhare of which we owe to others) but alſo of our Security and Preſervation; in ſhort, that both our Pleaſure and Safety, depend on Society.

Reaſon, therefore, from theſe Conſiderations, making its report to *Self Love*, that our Pleaſures and our Security had a very great dependance on others, *Self Love* produced *Good Will* to the Preſervation of thoſe others, on whoſe *Well-being* our own ſo abſolutely depended. Thus this *Good Will* produced Beneficence, or a grateful deſire to return Pleaſure and Safety to them, who gave ours to us. Reaſon thus proceeding further, finds that to keep up this Society, on which Self Preſervation depended, there was a neceſſity, that each particular ſhould have certain Rights inviolable, which to invade, was to deſtroy our own Security, in that of Society, by which our own is ſupported; and this be-

got *Juſtice*, which is *a conſtant and perpetual Will of giving every one his Due or Right*, which being every one's Caſe, it begot *Mutual Love*, and common Juſtice, becauſe every one contributes to the Safety and Pleaſure of each. Every one therefore has a particular Right, which it is the common Intereſt to Preſerve. So that from the Univerſal Principle of *Self-Love*, and *Self-Preſervation*, theſe Univerſal Virtues ariſe, and are fixt by the Univerſal Principle of each particular *Self Love*, and ſo firmly, and neceſſarily fixt, that the Breach of them endangers the Pleaſures and Safety of each particular Offender againſt them, and by Conſequence is a Breach of the firſt and moſt evident Principle of Nature, *Self-Love*, and *Self-Preſervation*; and ſo far is our Duty to our ſelves concern'd in their Breach. As for Example

The invading our Neighbours Rights, forfeits Mens Good Will to us, and gives them a Right to invade ours, by our breaking the common Bond of Security, and ſo takes away all Pretence to our own; it ſets every Man's hand againſt us, in order to ſecure the Publick Safety, which depends on the Inviolableneſs of each Man's right.

Thus an unbounded ſway of the Paſſions, in Drinking, Promiſcuous Copulations, Contentions, Sedition, Theft, Murder Litigiouſneſs, Enmity, Avarice, Medling in others Affairs, and the like, produce naturally, Want, Poverty, Contempt, Diſquiet, Confinement, Loſs of Goods, Baniſhment, and Death, and are all by conſequence Enemies to *Self-Preſervation*, and to be, therefore avoided on the Principle of *Self-Love*, and are for that Reaſon, a Breach of that part of the Law of Nature, which teaches us our Duty to our ſelves.

On the contrary to ſecure our *Safety*, and in that our *Pleaſure*, according to the dictates of *Self-Love*, we ought to engage the Affections of others, as much as we can, and fortifie them with Eſteem, and that purely in Duty to our ſelves, which is only to be done by our Adherence to Prudence or Wiſdom, Fortitude or Courage, Temperance, and the like. For the Obſervation of theſe it is, that begets Eſteem, as Eſteem does Honour and Intereſt, which fortifie our Security, and in that our Pleaſure. *Honour* in its Nature is built on an eſteem proceeding from our *Virtue*, which firſt did, and always only will raiſe one Man above another, ſecures juſt Pleaſures and Happineſs, and in that ſhows it ſelf the genuine Off-ſpring of *Self Preſervation*.

It ſecures our Quiet within, for the firſt Reward of Virtue, is its own intrinſick Pleaſure, ſince it naturally tends to Tranquillity of Mind and Health of Body. For all the good natur'd Paſſions, that is, the Paſſions that are duly regulated by Reaſon, and by Conſequence have a great ſhare in our Virtues, produce a ſatisfaction in the Mind of the Performer of thoſe Actions immediately, without any ſubſequent Pain; whereas all the Actions which the criminal Looſe of the Paſſions produces, are either join'd with, or follow'd by Pain, which is an Evil, *Self-Love* it ſelf teaches us to avoid. The natural Reward of theſe Virtues, therefore, that reduce the Paſſions to their juſt Bounds and Limits, is the Indearment, and Recommendation of the Poſſeſſour of them, to the Good-Will and Love of all Mankind: For every Man loves a publick Spirit and Benefactor, every Man wiſhes well to him, from whom he hopes *Good*, or at leaſt from whom he fears no Injury, which is com-

plying

plying perfectly with the first Principle of *Self-Preservation*, in assuring our Safety, and in that our Pleasure and Happiness.

I might add a third greater, than all, and that is the Conscience a good Man has in assimulating himself to the Goodness of God, and in his obedience to his Divine Will; in which he exercises the highest act of *Self-Love*, and *Self-Preservation*, as more immediately depending on God. But a fuller consideration of this I shall reserve for my discourse of our last Duty, that is to God.

Thus we have seen how far *Self-Love* has taught us the Duty, which by the Law of Nature we owe to our selves, and which will yet appear stronger, when we shall derive them from their Heavenly source more immediately, that is from the Will of God, our supream Protector, Benefactor, and Maker.

The Doctrine, therefore, that we draw from hence, is, that every thing is not lawful for us to do, that the Animal Passions prompt, or the Corporeal Impressions importune us to perform, and this by the Evidence of our darling Principle of *Self-Love*. That tho' Pleasure be our chief Good and Aim, yet, that Reason is to be judge of that Pleasure, that is how far it is Lawful, which is to say, how far it brings us greater Pain, or renders insecure those Enjoyments, which Nature design'd us for, and our Preservation, which is the Fund of all. It farther shews us, that when we pass the Boundaries of *Temperance* and *Justice*, we lose what we seek, and act against *Self-Love*, in weakning and endangering *Self-Preservation*. So that even in this we find a Duty to our Neighbour, interwoven so fast in our own Happiness and Security, that

they

they cannot be ſeparated without the Deſtruction of both. Which naturally therefore leads us to the ſecond Duty, which is that *Towards our Neighbour*,

Here you plainly ſee that I might purſue the ſame Track, and trace all our Duties to him from the ſame Original, *Self Love* rightly underſtood: Which being ſo obvious from what I have ſaid, I ſhall take another Path, and as I have drawn theſe from the nature of Particulars, ſo I ſhall deduce the reſt from the nature of Humane Society, that is from the *Will of God*, which muſt be an Eternal and Inviolable Sanction. The general Defection of Mankind from theſe Laws, thus eſtabliſh'd by God, render'd their force too inefficacious to attain the end they were deſign'd for, and ſo made it neceſſary, that the *Divine LOGOS* ſhould come in the Fleſh, to reſtore the nobleſt tye of our Duty to our Selves, to our Neighbour, and to God, in which all Religion, with the Happineſs of Mankind, both here and hereafter conſiſts.

I cannot perceive (interrupted *Pleonexus*) but that Mr. *Hobbs*'s Syſtem of the *State of War*, wou'd do the Buſineſs every jot as well, as what you have laid down: For tho' he ſuppoſes Man at firſt in a State of War, yet he concludes, that the Inconveniences of that State made Men agree to a Peace, as the more eligible; which not being to be preſerv'd, but by theſe Rules, they were confirm'd by the common conſent of Mankind for their own Security.

There is this difference (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) that M. *Hobbs* ſuppoſes all Right founded on Power, and ſo by conſequence, a Thief that is ſtronger than you, has a Right to what he takes

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from you by Force: for that which was *Natural Right* once, muſt be *Natural Right* ſtill, unleſs you can bring any evident Proof of an eſſential change of Nature ſince. But my Syſtem ſuppoſes the Principles of Virtue, or the Laws of Nature, founded on the Nature of things themſelves, ingrafted in the nature of Man, and fixt in his firſt principle of Being *Self-Love*; which was planted in him by the Sacred, and Supreme Cauſe of his Being, and by conſequence is of Eternal Original, and not Caſual, or by a Treaty of Peace, or Conſent of People compell'd to the Agreement, by the Inconveniencies they had experienc'd in the contrary, and by conſequence alterable, as often as each Party ſhall think it for his particular Benefit, which is a Principle, that juſtifies all the Diſhoneſty and Villany in the World.

But if Mr. *Hobbs*'s Gibberiſh have any meaning at all, it is this, that when Mankind was totally mad, unfurniſh'd with Reaſon, Wild, and Salvage like Brute Beaſts of Prey, they acted like Lunaticks, and Beaſts of Prey. But that when they had, I know not how, obtained Reaſon, they then began to act like rational Creatures. But I, and all Men that ever made a ſerious Reflection on Mankind, finding Reaſon eſſential to the nature of Man, can ſuppoſe no time, when they were without it, and therefore conclude that Mr. *Hobbs*'s natural State of War, cou'd never have been in Nature.

He ſuppoſes the Paſſions to have extinguiſh'd entirely all the Light of Nature, before there were thoſe Motives to inflame our Paſſions beyond the Power of Reaſon, by the Corruptions of Luxury, which were produc'd by Affluence, and Numbers: and never arriv'd to that exorbitant

Height,

Height, as univerſally to ſpread over all Mankind, I mean to a total Extinction of Reaſon, as is apparent from the Governments and Laws of the ſeveral Nations of the World, nay, and from the very Subſiſtence of Mankind, who muſt have ſunk in ſuch a State, and never have reach'd to our Age.

I ſhall, therefore, only premiſe two *Poſtulatums*, which you cannot deny me, becauſe I have already prov'd them. The firſt is, *That Man was made by an Omniſcient, Omnipotent, and infinitely good God, with a Beneficent Intent.* 2. *That Man has thoſe Faculties of Mind, which I have already prov'd, that is,* that Man is a rational Creature.

Man then being confeſs'd to be the Effect of an intelligent and good Cauſe, not of Chance, this Cauſe could Want, neither the Will, nor the Power to put him into a Station capable of yielding him that Happineſs, which was deſign'd him: but it being evident, that this entirely depends on Society; it follows, that Society is of divine Inſtitution, becauſe God could not impoſe a neceſſity of a thing, which he did not approve or deſign. It is alſo as evident, that God cou'd not in his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, lay on Man a neceſſity of *Society*, without furniſhing him with means of making that Society conducive to that End, which a Benevolent maker propos'd, that is, the Happineſs of the Creature. This *Means* is evidently *Reaſon*, which plainly diſcovers, by Man's Activity of Mind, and Reflection on the nature of Things, all the neceſſary Rules of this Society, which muſt make it uſeful to the common Happineſs of the whole.

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From this Natural Reflection of Reaſon, Man diſcovers an inborn Bent to Happineſs, and Natural Inclinations in our Conjunctions for Propagation of our Kind. Affections betwixt Parents and Children, native Tenderneſs, Pity, or Compaſſion; of which all Men have more or leſs (except ſome particular Monſters, who are ſo particular, that their being excepted, can make no Falſity in the general Rule) Natural Gratitude and Love of Benefactors, *&c.* All which reduce the Laws of Nature to one Principle of *Mutual Love* and *Kindneſs* amongſt all Mankind: which ſhows it to be the Will and Intention of their Maker, and of which there is the ſame Evidence, as of his Exiſtence; as I have already ſhown from the nature of Things, and Humane Society.

For this reflecting Reaſon ſees, that for the Subſiſtence of Society, there is a Neceſſity of *Dominion* and *Propriety*. For, as Mankind cou'd never ſubſiſt, without ſome ſort of *Government*, ſo cou'd it never be without ſome ſort of *Propriety*; whether that aroſe from Prepoſſeſſion Diviſion, or Agreement. For as for every Man's having a right to All, it reduces it indeed to what Mr. *Hobbs* propoſes, that none had a Right to any thing, But Man's Nature and Being is too limited to have a Right to all: nor has he ſuch extravagant Notions, as to engroſs what is of no uſe to him. And ſince Particulars cou'd not ſubſiſt without cultivating the Ground, and providing the Neceſſaries of Life, that being originally done by each Particular; the Fruits of it being the effect of particular Labour, it gave a fair and undoubted Right to Particulars, in what each had thus manur'd: the ſame may be ſaid of Families and Nations, when Mankind

kind encreas'd to such Bodies Politick, nor could there be any Quarrel about that, since no Man was hindred from cultivating as much as suffic'd his use. This gave a Propriety of Goods, without which there cou'd be no Society.

But since the Natural Inclinations of Man led him to the Propagation of his kind, and gave him a Love for the Help to this Propagation, with Tenderness and Affection for the Product of these Conjunctions of himself and Wife; he cou'd not distinguish which were his own Children, if he had not a Propriety in the Wife, exclusive of all the Promiscuous Embraces of Others; and therefore must lose the use of that natural Desire of Propagation, and that Tenderness and Love of his Children, which is the Cement of Society, the motive of Action, and the secret Ground of our Love to our Country. The same will hold good of the Love of Children to their Parents, which must be entirely lost in promiscuous Copulations. Besides, Humane Society cou'd not be preserv'd, unless this Propriety of Women were inviolable; for many might challenge the same Woman, which must produce Confusion, and dissolve Humane Safety and Society together: Without this likewise there cou'd be no Conveyance of Property, which must destroy Industry, when the Fruit of any Man's Labour cou'd not descend to his own undoubted Offspring. Nor can we express what a confusion it must cause about Propriety of Goods, on the Death of Particulars, *&c.* Hence it follows, that the Propriety of Women is another right of *Humane Society.*

But since not only the Violation of these Proprieties are inconsistent with Humane Society, but chiefly the Insecurity of the Persons, in consi-

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deration of whose Benefit and Happiness, those Properties are inviolable, there is a Necessity, that the Persons of Particulars shou'd be secure from the Invasion of each other, as being the Foundation of each other's Happiness and Security, which impos'd a Duty on all Mankind, reciprocally to one another, that none should invade the Life or Being of Particulars.

From these three Branches spring all the Duties we owe our Neighbour, and which are compriz'd in *Justice* and *Benevolence*. Justice extends to our keeping our Compacts; Sincerity and Truth; to our not injuring our Neighbour in any of his Proprieties and in giving him his due. Benevolence includes, Compassion, mutual Help, Desire of our Neighbours Welfare, and the like. And a Proof, that all these are obligatory, is, that God has made a necessity of them in the Constitution of Humane Society.

Now since in such a Variety of Properties as must be on the increase of People, and the Prevalence of the Passions, it was impossible, that Disputes should be decided without some third Person to decide them, whose Interest cou'd encline him no more to one side, than the other, who by Consent might put an end to Contests of this Nature, which else must disturb and confound Humane Society; It was absolutely necessary, that from the beginning there should be some Dominion or Government, which to preserve, as well as establish, was the common Interest of each Particular; because to that he ow'd the safety of his own Propriety, and without which there could be scarce any quiet Enjoyment of any thing. The Constitution of Humane Affairs, thus making Government necessary,

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this very Neceſſity is a Proof of its Divine Inſtitution. 'Tis true, indeed, that while the World was in its Infancy, the Fathers of Families might naturally have the Power of deciſion among their own Children: But when Families Multiply'd, Diſputes betwixt Families required a Third Perſon neceſſarily to decide Controverſies, and to ſee Juſtice impartially done, and this was the Riſe of Governments.

Thus we have ſeen that *Humane Society* was of divine Inſtitution, as well as *Propriety* and and *Government*. Whence it naturally follows, that all the Rules, which Neceſſity preſcrib'd for the Benefit and Security of them, had alſo the Divine Sanction, and were by Conſequence of inviolable Obligation. Theſe are all compriz'd in *Prudence*, *Juſtice* and *Temperance*; and their firſt Diſcovery was made by Thinking or Knowing, as *Cicero* obſerves, *That there is no more due to our ſelves, than to our Neighbour*; or by a more Divine, tho' equally rational and natural Rule of *Doing as you would be done by*, which ev'n Mr. *Hobbs* allows to be the Teſt of all the Laws of Nature.

If you deſire more particular Rules of theſe Virtues, I muſt requeſt you to recal to mind thoſe moral Maxims, which I have already laid down, from whence you may deduce the whole, or every particular Duty of the Law of Nature.

Having thus briefly run through our Duty to our Selves and to our Neighbour, I ſhall proceed to the laſt great Duty of the *Law of Nature* which is *Piety*, or *Our Duty to God*, which confirms, and gives Sanction and Authority to the whole.

Reaſon

Reaſon having taught us theſe Rules, and Precepts of Nature, and deduc'd them from the neceſſity of Humane Society, and the Principles of *Self Love* and *Self-Preſervation*, both which proceed from the Divine Original of our Being, who, as a certain Declaration of his *Will*, eſtabliſh't the firſt, and planted in us the laſt; it follows, that we are obliged to theſe Duties in Obedience to the Author of our Being; and that we cannot pleaſe him at the ſame time, that we contradict his *Will*; but on the contrary, as God cannot but approve of thoſe, who act, and live according to the Rules, he approves, ſo can he not be diſpleas'd with, or diſapprove of what Men act againſt his Apparent Will, and viſible Deſign, and Approbation, without a contradiction to his own Being, which is impoſſible. But all the before recited Principles or Laws of Nature, and all other, that flow from the ſame Source, are the Plain and Evident Effects, of the neceſſity of Humane Society, and the State of Mankind, who were made in that Order, and Condition by God. The neceſſary Conſequences, therefore, and Reſults of that Order, and Condition muſt have been deſign'd, and are enjoyn'd by their Good, and Omnipotent Cauſe; who for the ſame Reaſon muſt Condemn the Breach, and approve the Religious Obſervation of them.

And this gives them their Force Naturally, or from natural Reflection on the Mind of Man, which reaches beyond a *meer Conveniente*, that might ſtill be preſerv'd in the whole, tho' ſome Particulars forſook, or deſtroy'd them: And ſo a cunning Man, who cou'd either conceal his Vices, or do his Injuries with ſuch Art or Good Luck, as to Evade the Ignominy, or Pain of

Puniſhment; or the Hazard of the Hate, and Proſecution of Mankind againſt him, for the Breach of their common Security, wou'd, nay cou'd have no check on him, for being guilty of all the Vices in the World, that did not immediately affect his own Perſon, or Intereſt: Becauſe it often happens, that Men either want knowledge to diſcover the Ill, or Power to puniſh it. But when the Offender reflects, that his Breach of this Law is oppoſing the Will and Pleaſure, nay the viſible Command of God, he has no manner of reaſonable Evaſion, to promote his Offence, by hoping, that it can be hid from that Being, that knows all things, or ſecure from his Vengeance, whoſe Power has no Bounds, and who muſt diſapprove, and condemn what oppoſes, and as much, as a finite Being can, deſtroys the Conſtitution made by the Will and Pleaſure of God; unleſs you make his Will contradictory, which is impoſſible. And what he condemns, according to his *vindicative Juſtice*, he muſt puniſh, both in regard of the breach of his divine Law, and in regard to his *diſtributive Juſtice* to all Mankind, for there is no Breach of theſe Laws, but what does in ſome meaſure, or other injure ſome other Man, who has an equal Right to the Benefit of them, with our ſelves; and muſt, therefore, in Juſtice demand of their common Maker, or Governour Reparation, in the Puniſhment of the Offender, in proportion to the Offence. But in Conſideration, that there may be ſeveral Breaches of theſe Laws, which may be made out of Frailty, not Malice, that is by the ſudden impulſe of ſome Paſſion, and want of Reflection, which we may be ſorry for when we come to reflect on the Action, and wiſh it undone, and endeavour

endeavour to make ſome Compenſation for it, on which the Puniſhment naturally due to the Breach of the Law, may be remitted by the Mercy of God; the Remiſſion of the whole, or part of the Penalty of any Law, being the proper Object of Mercy; which in Men is greater or leſs, as they indulge, or oppoſe the good natur'd Paſſions: But in God it is always infinite, and therefore muſt be exercis'd, whenever the object is fit to receive it, by a true and perfect Converſion of Heart, which cannot be diſguis'd to God, and by Men is commonly gheſs'd at by Reſtitution and Amendment. For that can never be a true Repentance, that has not both theſe Qualities; tho' as to Man theſe may both be diſſembled, but can never avail the Hypocrite, in his ſight, who cannot be deceiv'd; and which can never therefore be the Object of Mercy, which is ſufficient, firſt to ſhew the neceſſary obligation of Obedience to the Laws of Nature; next the Viudicative Juſtice of God, in the Puniſhment of the Diſobedient; and thirdly, the Attribute of Mercy, the Conſideration of which, I refer'd to this place.

But as Experience ſhews us by the Succeſs of the Wicked, and the Peaceful Ends of the Impious, that theſe Puniſhments are not always inflicted in this World, nay, ſeldom in proportion to the Offence, it unavoidably follows, that we are to expect them in the next Life, having already prov'd the Immortality of the Soul, tho' even this is an Invincible Proof of the ſame. Hence naturally flows the Fear of God, which is juſtly call'd the *Beginning of Wiſdom*; for it is indeed the Beginning, or firſt ſtep to *Virtue*, which in the Scripture, and all reaſonable ſenſe is *Wiſdom*. For Fear deters us from

thoſe Things which obſtruct, or weaken our Conſideration of God, which being by Fear freed from thoſe Incumberances, eaſily leads us to the Beauty and Lovelineſs of Virtue, in its reaſonable Foundation, in its Aſſimilation to the Deity; where we find it in Perfection, which begets the firſt degrees of Love.

But as the Breakers of the Laws of Nature, have the Juſtice of God in his Puniſhments, in their View, ſo the Obſervers of them have his *Goodneſs* in their Eye, appearing in Rewards, and Benefits. Whence proceed *Faith*, and *Love*.

For knowing the Attributes of God, and Conſidering the State of Humane Affairs, and thence juſtly drawing his *Will*, they cannot but aſſure themſelves, that their Obedience to it, is pleaſing in his ſight; for how ſhou'd he but approve that which he has done, and his Approbation is an Argument of his Pleaſure. If therefore the Obedient conſider his Goodneſs, and his Juſtice, they have the comfortable and neceſſary Reflection, that God who approves, will Reward them, which begets *Faith* and *Hope*. But ſince it is Viſible, that this Reward is not here; nay, that the neceſſary Courſe of Things renders that impoſſible, without deſtroying the Freedom and Nature of Mankind, they with the higheſt Reaſon, and Infallible Aſſurance conclude, that the Eternal Approver of their Lives and Actions, will Reward them in the next, which Aſſurance begets Love.

But the Mind cannot run through all theſe Reflections, without conſidering the Wonderful Works of God, his Attributes of Power, Goodneſs, Wiſdom, *&c.* It muſt neceſſarily confeſs the ſupream Excellence of God's Nature, and

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own it the Beneficent Source of all Things; and that in him we live, move, and have our Being. The humble Acknowledgement of which Supream Excellence, and Eternal, and unalterable Power over us, is *Adoration*, which is apparently our Duty to God, as is evident from his very Exiſtence, and the Conſideration of his Attributes; which being allow'd, who can deny the Conſequence, that we ought with all Humility, Fear, Admiration, and Love, to avow the Belief of that, which is ſo plain and clear to our Reaſon. For if there be a God, as I have demonſtrated beyond the Power of a Cavil, what is more reaſonable, than to acknowledge what you cannot deny? But to acknowledge a Truth, full of ſuch tremendous, ſuch amazing Wonders, without a profound Veneration, and Reſpect, or rather Proſtration of Mind, is abſolutely impoſſible, which is *neceſſary Adoration*, which we ſee thus flows from the very Eſſence of God's Nature; and by Conſequence, the not doing it, proceeds from an Ignorance of, or not reflecting on that Divine Nature; from which Source aroſe the depravation of Mankind, and the loſs of his firſt Band to the Moral Law, the Knowledge of the true God. For when Men had once loſt the Knowledge of God in his *Unity*, they ſoon fell from their Knowledge of him in all his other Attributes, and laſtly, all tolerable Notion of him, and by Conſequence the Light of *Right Reaſon*. Man therefore cou'd never arrive at Happineſs, without a Reſtoration of the Rules or Laws of *Right Reaſon* to reclaim him to the Knowledge of God, and of thoſe Duties which we ow'd to him, to our Neighbour, and to our Selves for his Sake, and in Obedience to his

Law and *Will*. And this made the Neceſſity of *Revelation*, as I ſhall make evident as ſoon as I come to diſcourſe of the Chriſtian Religion, which I will now proceed to, if you have no objection to what I have ſaid in this point.

I am far from diſproving what you have ſaid (aſſumed *Chriſtophorus* after a Pauſe, to ſee if either of the other two had any thing to offer) on the contrary I highly approve your Arguments; but becauſe this laſt Point is of the greateſt Conſequence, and I find you lay it as the Foundation of a thing of the higheſt Importance, I will beg leave to add my Sentiments on the ſame Head. All expreſſing a Willingneſs to hear him, he began.

Piety, or what we call our Duty to God, is a part of *Diſtributive Juſtice*, for as its other Part Probity is, *to give every Man his Due*, ſo by *Piety we give that to God, which is his Due*, that is what by his Natural Right he may claim of us, and that is, what we vulgarly call *Worſhip*. *Worſhip* chiefly conſiſts in this, that we with the utmoſt Diligence apply our ſelves to *know* him *rightly*, for that anſwers the natural Bent of the Soul, which is not ſatisfy'd with an imperfect or falſe Knowledge and Information of things, eſpecially in a Point ſo neceſſary, and ſo worthy of a full and ſedulous Enquiry. The next Duty of *Piety* is, That we love and honour him with our whole Mind, and Soul, when once we are arriv'd at a true Knowledge of him: And ſince we wholly proceed from him, depend entirely on his Will, that we devote our whole ſelves, that is all the Force and Strength of our Bodies and Minds to him, ſubmitting our ſelves and all that is ours to his Holy Will, and abſolutely confiding in his Providence; and that

we adhere ſo ſtrictly, ſo inviolably to his Laws and Commands, whether written or unwritten, as to chuſe Infamy, Poverty, Torments, nay Death it ſelf, rather than ſurrender the Integrity of our Conſcience in the Violation of any one of them. Theſe are the Rights, that God juſtly demands of us; and whoever wou'd rob him of any Part does (as much as in him lies) an Injury to God.

We may eaſily conclude, that the *Worſhip* of God chiefly conſiſts in theſe particulars, that I have mentioned, from the general Opinion, that *Worſhip* is the Honour which we pay to God. For we pay the greateſt Honour to God when we rightly underſtand the Excellence of the *Divine Nature*, and how great an Affinity and Likeneſs there is betwixt that and the Humane Mind; and endeavour and contend with all our Force and Power to poliſh and ſtrengthen that part of our Soul, which brings us to the neareſt reſemblance with God; for when we have done ſo, we ſhall prefer any Pains, any Torments, or any Death to our ſubmiſſion to any Vice, and ſo to injure and contaminate the Soul with any Sin, or wilful Tranſgreſſion.

There cannot, I ſay, be any greater or more pregnant Proof of our Honour and Love to God, or any greater Conviction of our profound and awful Eſteem of his Nature, than what I have laid down. For while we ſhow ſo nice a regard to this Image or Picture of him, that we make no difficulty of Sacrificing all the Pleaſures of this Life, nay, and ev'n Life it ſelf, to our ſenſe of that more Divine Life (which we diſcover by *Right* Reaſon in Virtue) we evidently demonſtrate, that we love, Worſhip, and adore God in an infinite degree beyond this, ſince he is infinitely more ex-

cellent, than this Shadow or faint Picture of him in our Minds. For thoſe, who neglect their Regard to their Minds, plainly diſcover their Ignorance of God, or that they have not that Veneration for the divine Nature, which they ought to have.

But ſince the very Definition of Virtue, which is *always to purſue that which is ſimply and abſolutely the Beſt*, and not what is the moſt agreeable to the animal Life, is a ſufficient Proof that it is ſomething Divine, and the true Image of God. For this ſenſe of Things, which this Definition declares is plainly Divine, and exalted above the Animal Nature, and by conſequence is no weak Proof of the Immortality of the Soul.

But that there is ſuch a ſort of Virtue in Nature, is plain both from our Reflection on our own Minds, and the irrefragable Dictates of Right Reaſon, and, if that be any Addition, from the Authority of the old Philoſophers; whoſe Authority indeed is of no further Force, than that it proceeds from their juſt Conſideration of the Nature of things, and a right Reflection on the Nature and Faculties of the Humane Mind. Firſt *Plato*, who having ſhown that there wou'd be an end of all our Miſeries, as ſoon as we had taken our Flight to the Gods, from this Mortal State, explains himſelf thus: *This Flight* (ſays he) *is to be made like to God, as much as our Nature will permit: But this Similitude or Likeneſs conſiſts in Juſtice, Holyneſs, and Prudence.* And a little after, *God has no manner of Injuſtice, but is perfectly Juſt; nor is there any truer, or more like Picture and Image of him, than one of us cleans'd of all Injuſtice, and arriv'd to the perfect ſtate of Juſtice.* Again, *every honeſt and good Man is a Friend to God; but*

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the Diſhoneſt and Imprudent are the moſt unlike the Divine Nature. By which *Plato* means, that Virtue has a ſort of Divinity, and is aſſimilated and related to God.

This is the cauſe likewiſe of *Cicero*'s launching out into theſe magnificent Eulguiums on the humane Soul. *The Humane Soul* (ſays he) *is taken or gathered from the Divine Mind, if it be lawful to expreſs it in that manner; ſince there is nothing in the compaſs of Nature to which it can be compar'd but to God alone.* Thus likewiſe largely explaining the Oracle of the *Delphick Apollo* KNOW THY SELF, he ſays. *For whoever knows himſelf will immediately find, that there is ſomething Divine in his Nature; and will look on his Wit, Knowledge and Underſtanding, as an Image dedicated to God, and ſo will do, and think things worthy of ſo great a Gift of God.* How much more nobly did this Heathen think of God, and the Duty ariſing from him, than Mr. *Hobbs*, and the Practice of too many of us Chriſtians wou'd perſwade that we do.

But it wou'd be endleſs to run through all, that particular Moraliſts even among the Heathens, have ſaid on this Point; from all which it is very plain, that there is ſo great a ſhare of Divinity in Virtue, and in our Mind if we regard and purſue Virtue in its Relation to God, that is, as the lively Image of God, and Worſhip him in the beſt and moſt excellent manner. For whereas the Rites and Ceremonies of Worſhip are variable, not eternal, this one Right of God is immutable and Everlaſting. So that the ſum and ſubſtance of natural Religion ſeems to be couch'd in this Precept of *Antoninus. To be mindful of God, and to reflect that he delights not in empty Flat-*

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teries, but that all things rational are made with a Likeneſs to himſelf. Or in this other, where he admoniſhes us *to be pleas'd, delighted, and ſatisfy'd with paſſing from one Action that is ſervicable to the publick Good, to another publick Action joyn'd with the Remembrance of God.* To imitate God, as much as we are able, and our Love of his Perfection, is the moſt immutable, and invariably fixt Right of the Deity:

But this is no manner of Excluſion of any other Rights, whether made known to us by Divine Revelation, or eſtabliſh'd by the Commands of the ſupreme Magiſtracy, or the Legiſlature of our Country. Such are particular Ceremonies, and various Rites, and the like Circumſtances of Divine Worſhip, which by the virtue of the Law become Rites Divine: which it is unjuſt to violate till they are all abrogated by the ſame lawful Authority, which made them, provided, that they are not repugnant to the Scripture, or the Preſcripts of ſupreme Virtue.

Theſe Duties of *Piety* or *Religion*, are rationally deduc'd from ſeveral Maxims of right Reaſon. As for example from this,

That the ſupreme Good is to be lov'd with the moſt ardent, or the higheſt Affection, and that the ſame ſupreme Good, and thoſe Goods, which make the neareſt Approaches to it, be not poſtpon'd, or made ſubordinate to the mean or middle or the leaſt Goods, but the contrary.

That we are to return Good, not Evil, for Good.

That it is better to obey God than Man, or our own proper Concupiſcences, or blind Deſires.

That

That we ought to chuſe a Good, *and avoid an* Evil. *To prefer the* Greater *to the* Leſs. *To endure the* Leſs *Evil, rather than incur the* Greater.

That which will *certainly happen, or come to paſs, we ought to have a* preſent *regard to, Or that we ought to look on what will certainly be, as if it were* preſent; *becauſe it will certainly once be ſo. The Reaſon in proportion will hold in* probable *Events.*

Laſtly, not to Burthen you with too many *That we undergo the preſent Evil, to avoid an Evil that may probably happen of infinitely greater Conſequence, as to Weight and Duration; which yet is ſtronger, when we ſuppoſe a Certainty inſtead of a Probability.*

I ſhall offer nothing on the Exiſtence of God, or on the Immortality of the Soul, becauſe I find that, *Chriſtophil* has already hande'd thoſe Points, *on which all Religion depends.* What I have urg'd is only a corroborating Proof and Explanation of our Duty to God, according to the Light of Reaſon, and which is eaſily confirmed with the ſtrongeſt Evidence from theſe ſix Maxims, which I have advanc'd, as being the Source of the Reaſons of theſe Duties; and whence a little Reflection will draw them without the leaſt difficulty.

Having offer'd this, Sir, (purſu'd he to *Chriſtophil*) I leave you now to the Proſecution of your Diſcourſe in Proof of the Chriſtian Religion, which has been often attempted, and admirably performed by a great many of our Divines, but in a manner, which ſeems yet to want ſomething for the eaſie Conviction of the more unlearned ſort. For tho' their Proofs of the Truth of the *Chriſtian* Religion be abſolute-

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ly and beyond Controverſie convincing to Men of Learning, yet they do not ſeem to be calculated for the Conviction of the unlearned Enquirer, who yet may have Apprehenſion enough of plain Reaſoning, and indeed more juſtly require, and deſerve our Endeavours.

You have touch'd a Point (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) mentioned in the beginning of this our Conference, by this young Gentleman, and which therefore I have promis'd to remove; and am now come to the place of the performance of that Promiſe.

Pleonexus was juſt going to deſire a Ceſſation according to his Cuſtom, when they were inform'd that the ſmall Collation waited them below. On which *Chriſtophorus* deſir'd them to walk down, and defer the Diſpute till after Supper; which was very agreeable to *Pleonexus*, who was ſoon weary of Enquiries of this Nature.

The Sixth and Laſt Diſcourſe, Of the Certainty and Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion.

THE moderate Repaſt being over, and a few minutes paſt in occaſional Diſcourſe, *Philalethes*, who was earneſt in the purſuit of ſo important a Truth, reviv'd the former Enquiry by a Requeſt to *Chriſtophil*, to make out what he had promis'd in the *eaſie* and *obvious* Proof of the *Chriſtian* Religion.

I ſhall

I ſhall moſt willingly (anſwered *Chriſtophil*) comply with your Deſires, ſince they are ſo agreeable to my Wiſhes, and promiſe ſo happy a Reward of my Endeavours, as the convincing you of a Point ſo neceſſary for both your preſent and your future Happineſs.

I have in order, and with a Proſpect of this End, gone to the very Fountain head of *all* Religion, and have ſhew'd it to you in the Exiſtence of a God. And to conduct you to Truth with the greater, nay, with an infallible Evidence, I have proceeded from his meer Exiſtence, to ſhew you clearly ſo much of his Nature, that is to ſay, of his divine Attributes, as is abundantly ſufficient to attain the End we propoſe. And I have been the more particular in them, that I might furniſh you with a ſure, and certain Teſt, to try all Opinions by, which may be offered by the different Sects, and Parties into which the World is divided.

From his Exiſtence and Attributes, I have likewiſe evidently demonſtrated that Attribute, which makes all his other, and his very Exiſtence of any Concern to us; I mean his *Providence*; which I have ſufficiently vindicated from thoſe Impious Objections made by Men, whoſe blind ſlavery to ſome ſordid Paſſions, rais'd them in favour of that Criminal Servitude, of which they are ſo prepoſterouſly fond. This led me to another Point of equal moment, that is a thorough Conſideration of the Soul of Man from which it is plain, that it is diſtinct from the Body, and knows, and acts in a different manner from it, in willing things contrary to the Dictates of the Corporeal Impreſſions; and underſtanding meer intellectual Objects. From whence, and from the Attributes of God I have put its Immortality

mortality beyond any manner of rational Doubt. For 'tis directly contrary to the Nature, and Attributes of God, that the Soul ſhould be Mortal, becauſe the Diſorder of Mankind, which neceſſarily proceeds from his free Agency, makes many of the Good ſuffer here, and live miſerably: but whatever is contrary to the Attributes of God muſt be falſe. The Neceſſity of that Enquiry is apparent from this Conſideration, that if the Humane Soul were not Immortal, all the foregoing Demonſtrations, and all the ſubſequent Doctrines wou'd be of no manner of Conſequence to Men, more, than to the moſt imperfect of Brute Animals, or the very ſtocks and ſtones inſenſible of all Pain, or Pleaſure.

But the Soul being thus prov'd immortal, it is obvious to common Senſe, that ſince it is to endure for ever, it highly imports every rational Creature ſeriouſly, and with the utmoſt Attention to enquire, and throughly weigh what will be its future State: and it will infallibly follow from this Conſideration, That this State muſt either be of Pain or Pleaſure, and that by conſequence that Pain or Pleaſure, muſt be greater than either in this World; ſince, as the Pleaſure, ſo the Pain of the Mind is greater, than that of the Body, ſo that the periſhing of the Body will be no Advantage to the Wicked, ſince the Mind cannot periſh alſo. This I ſpeak without regard to the Reſurrection of the Body, which is a Doctrine of Revelation, by ſuppoſing that, the additional Pain of the Body cannot leſſen that of the Mind.

Next I have made appear, that, as God has given us an Immortal, and Rational Soul, ſo he has made us with a Beneficent Intention that,

that is, that he made us to be happy, and that, as he cou'd not make us rational Creatures without a Freedom of Agency, ſo he has proportion'd the Meaſures of our Happineſs to our Means of obtaining it, by preſcribing ſuch Laws for our Living, as our Reaſon ſhou'd plainly, and obviouſly lead us to, if we wou'd follow its Directions. For as *Cicero* obſerv'd, in what *Chriſtophorus* quoted from him, *No Nation is ſo Ignorant and Barbarous, but may attain to the Knowledge of Virtue, if they will follow the Guidance of Nature*, that is of *Reaſon*; which is juſtifi'd by St. *Paul*'s Aſſertion, that *they who know not the* Law, *are a* Law *to themſelves*. From this I demonſtrated the Precepts, or Law of Nature, which was the firſt, and Eternal Rule of our Actions given us by God, which never yet was, nor ever will be altered: for the Law of *Moſes*, and the Law of *Chriſt* were the Reſtoration of this Eternal Law, which Man by his Follies, corrupt Cuſtomes, and Vices, had either univerſally forſaken, or extremly weaken'd, by loſing the Knowledge of the ſureſt and moſt inviolable Band, and Obligation of them all, the *Will and Love of God*, and the true Knowledge of him, and by Conſequence his true *Worſhip*, which was of even ſtronger Right, than our Duty to our Selves or Neighbour; and ſo by a plain Conſequence had loſt all Security and means of Happineſs, both here and hereafter.

For it is as evident as the very Being of God, that all Religion, both Natural and Reveal'd, was only and purely for the Happyneſs of Man. For the Creation of Man, or Angels, or any other Being, cou'd not add one Jot or Tittle to the full and compleate Beatitude of the Deity; ſince that is contrary to his very Nature, and Eſſence:

Eſſence: For what cou'd admit encreaſe might ſuffer Diminution.

The Happineſs of Man, therefore, being the End and Aim of God, in the Production of Man, what muſt be the ſame uniform End of all the Laws, and Revelations, which he has been pleas'd from Time to Time to beſtow upon him, beneficently to compell him, as much as a free Agent cou'd be compell'd, to what Reaſon, and his own Nature ſo plainly prompted him, and mov'd his Deſires to.

This therefore being the Aim of the *Chriſtian* Religion, give me leave to premiſe ſome Reflections on Miracles, ſince on them at leaſt the Propagation of the Goſpel ſo much depended.

There are therefore three Marks neceſſary to prove a true Miracle. 1. It muſt be above all Humane Power and Force. 2. It muſt be out of the Conſtant Order of Nature. 3. If there is to be any Conſequence drawn from a Miracle, in favour of any one, this ſhou'd be foretold by him, whoſe Power produces the Miracle, or by him in whoſe Favour it is wrought, or that at leaſt it ſhou'd happen at the Time, that it is wanted. But I ſhall examine each of theſe Heads apart, to ſee the uſe of them more fully.

Firſt, we call it not a Miracle, if we ſee a Man bear four hundred pound Weight, becauſe that is not beyond the Power or Force of a Man to do. But ſhou'd we ſee a Man carry a Thouſand pound weight, provided the other two Conditions accompany'd it, it muſt be allow'd to be a Miracle, becauſe that is abſolutely above the Humane Strength. But ſome will only allow a Miracle, to be that which requires the

the Omnipotence of God to accompliſh, by being beyond the Power of all created Beings. But I ſhall ſhew their Error, when I ſpeak of the Author of Miracles.

We may in the mean while gather from hence one Mark, by which we may diſtinguiſh a real Miracle, from a falſe one. Whatever Wonder is boaſted for a Miracle, and does not abſolutely ſurpaſs the whole Power, and Force of Man, or may be compaſs'd by any Slight, or Art, affords pregnant Grounds of Suſpicion. It is not for Example, above the power of Art to preſerve ſome hing like a Man's Head, ſeveral Years uncorrupted; ſince we can make a Waxen Image of one that will hold many Ages. And even by the Surgeon's skill, the Humane Body, and any Part of it may be preſerv'd for many Years, entire in its Colour and Feature. As an Ingenious Friend of mine, Mr. *Greenhil* the Surgeon has now publiſh'd Propoſals, for the Printing an excellent Book to prove. We ought therefore very narrowly, and with the utmoſt Care and Scrutiny, to examine whether or no ſome Art, or Fraud be not conceal'd in the pretended Miracle; which Enquiry if we are deny'd to make, there is abundant Ground to ſuſpect a Juggle.

Thus, *Secondly*, No Man ought to think it a Miracle, to ſee Metal Diſſolv'd, and Stones reduc'd to their Calx by Fire, becauſe Common Experience ſhews, that to be the natural Effect of Fire. But we may juſtly term it a Miracle, if the third Mark be not Wanting, for Men to walk about in a fiery Furnace unharm'd, and their very Cloaths unſing'd. But here the matter of Fact ought to be beyond Queſtion; for it wou'd be very ridiculous, to put our ſelves to the troubleof examining, whether or no it be contrary to

the common Courſe of things, when we are not ſatisfi'd, that the Thing thus to be conſider'd, was really done. And this is the common Pretence of the Vulgar Legends of falſe Miracles.

There are ſome indeed, who deny that theſe are a certain Teſt of Miracles; for, ſay they, ſince we are not entirely acquainted with the Order and Nature of Things, it is poſſible, that abundance of Events, which ſeem contrary to the natural Order of Things, may yet in reality be otherwiſe; I confeſs indeed, that our Idea of Natural Things is either inadequate, or at leaſt, that we do not know that it is adequate. But yet on the other hand, our Ignorance of theſe Affairs is not ſo great, that we can never certainly aſſert any thing to be contrary to the Order of Nature. The Experience of all Nations, and all Ages ſufficiently explains moſt things; particularly theſe Inſtances I have given. 'Tis certain that we have not a perfect Knowledge of all the Qualities of the Humane Nature; but yet we know ſo many of them, that we are ſure 'tis above the Power of Humane Strength to carry a Thouſand Weight, and to continue in the Fire without Burning. We may indeed reaſonably doubt, whether the Entrance of a Comet into our *Vortex* or *Turbillion*, be againſt the Order of Nature, or not, becauſe we have not a ſufficient Skill in the Motions, and Revolutions of Comets, to determine when they are out of the Order of Nature, and when not. But when we take things which fall into the Experience of all Men, and all Ages, we may certainly pronounce of their poſſibility in Nature, And of this kind are the Inſtances I have given.

In the third place, that which happens unexpectedly, will never be look'd on, as a Miracle,

cle, from whence any Conſequence can be drawn. It is for example reported, that the Body of *Alexander* continu'd ſeveral days after his Death, without Corruption, in the Hot Climate of *Meſopotamia*, and that he retain'd that Vigour, and Complexion of Countenance, which is generally the Effect of Spirit and Life, which if we ſhou'd condeſcend to own as a Truth, yet cou'd no conſequence be drawn from it, becauſe it was neither foretold by any one, nor cou'd any one receive any advantage from it. The ſame may be ſaid of moſt of the Portents, which we find in the Heathen Hiſtorians. But when a Man foretells a Miracle, that is, the time when it ſhall be done, and makes uſe of it in his own, or another's Behalf, then indeed we may draw this Conſequence from it, that the Author of the Miracle had reveal'd it to him, who foretold it, and that he did it in his Favour, which he wou'd not do, unleſs he in whoſe Favour it was done, was moſt acceptable to him. Thus *Moſes* foretold, that *Iſrael* ſhou'd be deliver'd by God, before the Red-Sea was commanded to divide it ſelf for their Paſſage in the whole View of *Iſrael*; and by this Event he prov'd himſelf to be a true Prophet, and that their Departure out of *Egypt* was pleaſing, and agreeable to God. For God wou'd never have done ſo great a Miracle, in favour of an Impoſtor, to favour an Eſcape of a People, which were odious to him.

This third Mark of Miracles renders their Objection vain and triffling, who attribute all Miracles to a certain unknown, yet neceſſary Order, and Revolution of Nature. For if that Order of Nature be unknown to Mankind, how came it to paſs, that the Prophets, Chriſt and

his Apoſtles ſo infallibly foreſaw the Events of it, that they perpetually happen'd after they had pronounc'd their Prayers, or their Words? To this Queſtion, theſe wiſe Gentlemen are not able to make any Reply.

But ſince all theſe three Marks are found in the Miracles, which are recorded in the Scriptures, it is very clear from thence, that they are truly Miracles.

Let us now if you pleaſe, conſider the immediate and efficent Cauſe of Miracles. It is plain from the deſcription I have made of them, that we exclude Mankind, and thoſe common Natural Cauſes, which act by, and according to that Order, which God eſtabliſh'd in the Beginning. And hence it is that ſome affirm, that no Miracles can be done againſt the Order of Nature, but by the infinite Power of God.

It cannot be deny'd, but that innumerable Miracles are the immediate Effect of the Divine Power, according to the Teſtimony of the Scriptures in many Places. But that is not the Point in debate, but this, whether they are always without Exception to be attributed ſo abſolutely to God, as their immediate, and total Cauſe, as perpetually above the Force of any created Being. To give a poſitive Anſwer to this, a Man ought to be acquainted with the utmoſt Bounds of the Power of all Creatures; and know that Miracles are of that Nature, that they really exceed thoſe Bounds. It is certain, that Miracles are done againſt the ordinary Courſe of Nature; but how do we know, that God has given no created Spirit Power to tranſgreſs that ſtated Order of Nature? Though that Order be the Work of an infinite Power, yet certainly it follows not that it can not be chang'd or alter'd by any other Power,

Power, but that which made it. For it is plain from the Scripture, that ſeveral Miracles were done by Angels, by the Command of God.

It is indeed very credible, that this Order is never broke by the Angels, but by the Command, and peculiar Permiſſion of God. For it wou'd be unworthy its Author, to have that Order, moſt wiſely eſtabliſh'd by the Supream Lord of all things, raſhly, and frequently chang'd by the Creature. Hence it appears, from the Holy Scriptures, that theſe Miracles were rarely done, and never without the moſt weighty Occaſions and Causes.

What I have ſaid of the Power of Angels will hold for the Bad, as well as the Good. Not that I wou'd pretend to level the Power of all Angels, ſince perhaps ſome may be able to do more than Others.

It may be ſaid, that if we allow Angels the Power of working Miracles, as well as God; Firſt, how ſhall we know which are done by God, and which by an Angel? Secondly, how ſhall we tell the Miracles of a good Angel from thoſe of a Bad? The nature of a Miracle, does not ſeem to require an infinite Power to perform it, ſo that from that we cannot draw the certainty of its Author, but by how much the more difficult the Miracle ſeems to be, by ſo much it makes the nearer Approaches to an infinite Author. We cannot for Example but ſuppoſe the foreſeeing, or foretelling things to come after a great many Years and Ages, to proceed immediately from God, tho' we do not know the certain Bounds of the Angelick Power; but we eaſily believe it in the Power of either a good, or a bad Angel to raiſe a Storm.

As to the other Difficulty, viz. of diſtinguiſhing betwixt the Miracles of a Good and a Bad Angel, we may give a much more certain Anſwer. Since Truth is *One* and *Simple*, it is always conſiſtent with it ſelf; wherefore whatever Miracle is directed to perſwade a Falſity muſt proceed from a lying, and therefore, from an Evil Angel. If therefore any Miracle ſhou'd be done to promote or confirm a Doctrine, which we know to be, falſe by *undoubted Revelation*, or *Right Reaſon*, we immediately attribute it to a deceitful Author, and truly judge it to be ſome Bait laid, by the Devil, to undermine the Weak, and Ignorant. On the contrary, when we ſee a Miracle directed to the Proof or Recommendation of a Revelation agreeable to *Right Reaſon*, and for the Guidance of Mankind, we adjudge it to God, or a good Angel: For an Evil Angel, that is an Enemy to Virtue, and Piety, wou'd never work Miracles to bring us to Virtue, and Godlineſs, and ſo deſtroy his own Harveſt, and contradict his own Deſires.

There can be no Conſequence drawn from Miracles, whoſe End and Aim we know not, and ſuch are all the Portents of the Heathens. But let us ſuppoſe a Perſon or Prophet coming to Men, defil'd with Errors, and Vices, and endeavouring to reduce them to wholeſomer Ways, and a better Mind, and Inclination, and when he has laid down his Doctrine, taught them what they are to believe, and what to do to be deliver'd from their Vices, and Errors, if he ſhould tell them, that he was ſent from God to accompliſh this Work, and declare, that he wou'd do ſuch Miracles, as an Argument, that the Commands he delivers were receiv'd from God, and if he accordingly does thoſe Miracles, there

there can be no manner of doubt of the Truth of his Assertion. For no Evil Angel cou'd assist him to do good, and add a Force and Weight, to his Holy and true Doctrine: Nor wou'd God or Good Angels disturb the common Order and Course of Nature, to give Credit and Authority to an Evil Man.

Nor let any one here tell me, that a Deceiver shall turn, and apply the extraordinary Effects of hidden Causes to his own Use and Advantage, in imposing on the credulous People, as if they were sent by Heaven, as Testimonials for him, whereas they were the necessary Events of irresistible Causes. For there is no room for this Scruple, or Objection in Miracles, which are foretold before they happen. For those are infallible Credentials of an extraordinary Revelation.

A cunning Man may inndeed make use of unusual Events after they are come to pass, but his Cunning can never reach to the foretelling such unexpected Portents. Thus in the instanc'd Miracle of the dividing the Red Sea by *Moses*, the Event exactly answering the Prediction, none can be so mad, as to doubt but, that it must have been reveal'd to him by the Author of the Miracle, nay, and that the Miracle was done in Favour of his Mission. But for *Alexander*'s passing under the *Pamphylian* Mountain, by the Favour of the North Winds keeping back the Tide, to attribute that to a Miracle is ridiculous, since there is nothing so variable as the Winds, and he made use of the lucky Accident.

Lastly, as Contradictions are not the Objects of God's Power, so neither can Contradictory Effects make a Miracle. But what I said of the Omnipotence of God, will suffice for that

I ſhall only add here, that if we examine all the Miracles of the Old and New Teſtament, there is not one which is contradictory, or repugnant to the Nature, or Eſſence of things. God has done Miracles of all ſorts, but yet they can all be expreſſed in intelligible Propoſitions. It is for example no hard Matter to underſtand, that God raiſed the dead. But ſhou'd any one tell me, that God made Man to be dead, and alive at the very ſame individual Numerical Moment, that wou'd be a Propoſition, that I never cou'd underſtand, and won'd therefore in vain be propos'd, as an Object of my Faith.

Hence it appears, that a Miracle, which great Part of the Chriſtian World, will needs perſwade us, is now done in the *Euchariſt*, can on no Account in the World be admitted, for they ſay 'tis a Body extended, and not extended, one and not one.

I approve of your Marks of true Miracles (ſaid *Chriſtopherus*) both becauſe they are highly rational, and alſo becauſe they the more forcibly evince the Truth of thoſe of our Bleſſed Saviour, which were all attended, with thoſe three Marks, you require. This the better diſtinguiſhes them from the Legendary Wonders, whoſe Number and Abſurdities have brought no ſmall Reflection on Miracles in General, and ſo weaken'd the Foundations of Chriſtianity. I cannot ſufficiently recommend that Teſt of Miracles, which tries them by the Doctrine, they are done to promote. For it is certain, that our ſureſt way is to Judge of the Doctrine by the Miracles, and of the Miracles by the Doctrine, or to ſpeak more properly, and without the Imputation of a Circle, we are to Judge of the Miſſion of the Deliverer of a Doctrine by the Miracles, and of thoſe Miracles by the

Doctrine

Doctrine he delivers; for as one diſtinguiſhes the Doctrines, ſo does the other the Miracles.

But ſince there are Miracles, which are certain Proofs of the Truth, and Others which are not certain Proofs of the Truth, there is a Neceſſity, that there ſhou'd be ſome Marks to know them by, or they wou'd be wholly uſeleſs, but they are ſo far from being uſeleſs, that they are almoſt the very Foundation of the Building.

The Rule and mark, therefore, of Miracles muſt be ſuch, which does not deſtroy the Proof which true Miracles give of Truth, which is the principal End of Miracles. If Falſehood had never any tryall, or pretended Miracles, the certainty of Miracles wou'd be beyond Diſpute. If therefore there were no Rule to diſtinguiſh them, Miracles wou'd be of no Uſe, which we have no Manner of Reaſon to ſuſpect.

Moſes gave us one Mark, which is ſet on the Miracles done in Favour of *Idolatry*, Deut. 13. v. 1, 2, 3. *If there ariſe among you a Prophet, or a Dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a Sign or a Wonder, and the Sign, or the Wonder come to paſs, whereof he ſpake unto thee ſaying, let us go after other Gods, (which thou haſt not known,) and let us ſerve them, thou ſhalt not hearken to the Words of that Prophet, or that Dreamer of Dreams, for your Lord your God proveth you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your Heart, and with all your Soul, &c.* Our Bleſſed Saviour has alſo given us a Teſt of the Miracles of Chriſt in *Mark* 9. *And John anſwered and ſaid we ſaw one caſting out Devils in thy Name, and he followeth not us; and we forbad him becauſe he followeth not us. But* Jeſus *ſaid, forbid him not, for there is no Man who ſhall do a Miracle*

in

in my Name, that can lightly ſpeak Evil of me. Whence it follows, that none who openly declare themſelves againſt *Jeſus* Chriſt, can do a Miracle in his Name; and whoever does a Miracle againſt this he cannot do it in his Name, and is not by conſequence to be minded; ſo that the Marks of a true Miracle is when it recommends, and teſtifies a Doctrine, that advances the Glory of one God, and one Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* his Son.

It is therefore, no difficult matter to judge of the Truth of Miracles, by conſidering whether or no they have theſe Marks, which ſhew them ſent from God and Chriſt.

All Religion is falſe, that does not in its Faith adore one God, as the Principle of all Things, and in its Morals love one God, as the Object of all Things.

Now ſince all the Doctrines of Chriſt were directed to this End, and confirmed by Miracles; all Religion, that does not acknowledge *Jeſus Chriſt* confirmed by God to be his Meſſenger, muſt be falſe; and its Appeal to Miracles wou'd be of no uſe, becauſe none can be brought, which can have the Marks before mention'd out of the *Old* and the *New Teſtament*.

The *Jews* in the *Moſaic Law* had a Doctrine of adoring God in Faith, and Loving him above all Things, and that confirmed by Miracles, with Commands not to hearken to any Workers of Wonders, who taught a contrary Doctrine. And this is their Plea for not hearkning to the Doctrines of the *Goſpel*; But it is a very erroneous Reaſon, ſince the Caution was firſt given againſt *Idolatry*, a Doctrine contrary to the Worſhip of one God; whereas, the Precepts of the *Goſpel*, were directed to the ſame End to which thoſe of *Moſes* were, and they being forewarn'd

by

by *Moſes* to hear all, that *Chriſt* ſhould tell them, and ſeeing God declare for *Jeſus* in ſo many, and ſuch wonderful Miracles, they were inexcuſable for being incredulous, or refractory to the *Goſpel*. As our Saviour ſays, *John* 15. 24. *If I had not done among them the Works which no other Man did, they had not had Sin, but now they have both ſeen and hated both me and my Father.*

From which Words of *Chriſt Jeſus*, it is evident, that he judg'd his Miracles to be a certain Proof of his Doctrine, and that the *Jews* had an Obligation to believe it on account of them. In ſhort, the Miracles of our Saviour, rendered the Incredulity of the *Jews* Criminal, tho' all the Proofs, which cou'd be taken out of the Scriptures, while *Chriſt* was yet living, cou'd not amount to a Demonſtration, the Completion of the Prophecys being in his Death. *Moſes* for Example foretold, that there wou'd a Prophet come; but that Text did not prove that *Jeſus* was that Prophet: This and other Texts of Scripture might make it probable, that he might be the *Meſſias*, but theſe joyn'd with the Miracles made the Proof Infallible.

The Prophecies, I have ſaid, cou'd not be a ſufficient Proof of *Chriſt* in his Life-time; and therefore the Prophecies cou'd never make thoſe, who did not believe in him, guilty of any Sin, if his Miracles had not come in, and decided the Point. But when the Doctrines are not contrary to God, the Miracles, that are wrought to confirm them, give them a Divine Authority

Jeſus Chriſt ſufficiently prov'd himſelf to be the *Meſſias*, by confirming his Doctrines by the *Scriptures*, fulfilling the Prophecies, and giving

ing the laſt Certainty to all by unconteſtable Miracles. Inſomuch that *Nicodemus*, a Ruler of the *Jews*, coming to *Chriſt*, John 2. 3. confeſs'd, *Rabbi, we know, that thou art a Teacher come from God, for no Man can do theſe Miracles, that thou doſt, except God be with him.* Here it is plain, that *Nicodemus* try'd not the *Miracles* by the Doctrine, but the Doctrine by the Miracles, at leaſt in what he ſaid.

But the Belief of *Nicodemus* ſeems founded on a certain, and invariable Principle, that God cou'd not lead us into Error, and that was ſufficient to ſtifle the vain Traditions of the *Phariſees*, without dwelling on the Doctrines of *Chriſt*, which, tho' deduc'd from *Moſes*, were far different from the deductions of the *Phariſees*: And *Nicodemus* ſeeing God declare for *Jeſus* by ſuch Miracles, as cou'd not be done if God were not with him, he ſubmitted to the Manifeſtation of Divine Truth, which evidently depended on God's Veracity.

There ſeems a reciprocal Tye betwixt God and Man; Man is oblig'd to receive that Religion, which God plainly and evidently ſends to him; and God's Goodneſs and Veracity obliges him not to lead Man into Error.

But if the Workers of Miracles (who can not do them without the Power of God, I mean ſuch Miracles as we have already had the Marks and Circumſtances of) work them to Eſtabliſh ſome Doctrine, whoſe Falſity cannot be diſcover'd by common Sence and Reaſon, and if a more powerful Worker of Miracles does not forewarn us not to believe them, it wou'd be to lead us into Error.

But how will you (interrupted *Philonexus*) then evade thoſe Texts, that aſſert that God

God does Tempt us? Nay, do we not in the Lord's Prayer, desire God not to lead us into Temptation; And may he not therefore tempt us to Falsity, by Miracles? For my part, I can see no reason, why he should be allow'd to Tempt us one way, and not another.

You run on a false Apprehension of the word *Tempt*, (reply'd *Christophorus*) which signifies no more than to *try us*. Whence it is plain, that there is a vast difference betwixt trying us, and betraying us into an Error in pure Obedience to his Will. For believing, on the Force of a Miracle, is believing because God has by that means declar'd it to be his Will, which would be highly unjust, and by Consequence directly contrary to all the Attributes of God. God therefore does try us, but by no means lead or betray us into Errors. Tryal, or that sort of Temptation, puts us on the Opportunities, or Occasions of Evil, but it imposes no Necessity or our Committing it. But to betray, or lead us into Error, is to impose a Necessity on us to agree to and follow a Falsehood, which is what God cannot do, and yet what he must do, if in a doubtful Question, by shewing Miracles on the Wrong side, he perswade us 'tis the Right. To trye us, is to advance our Interest in him, by giving us an Opportunity of showing, that we truly love him, and cannot be diverted from that Love by any apparent Pleasure, or Advantage. But to do Miracles in the Behalf of Falsehood is to compel us to what he hates, a *Lye*, and to punish us for that we cou'd not help.

Hence it is plain, that the *Jews* were oblig'd to believe in *Jesus Christ*; and tho' during his Life there might be some grounds to suspect, his

his being the *Meſſias* till his Death had fulfilled all the Prophecies, yet his Miracles were an infinite Over-ballance for that Suſpicion.

The falſe Opinion of our Saviour's being Born at *Nazareth*, not at *Bethlethem*, tho' it brought a difficulty on them, becauſe by the Prophecies, *Chriſt* was to be Born at the latter Place, yet his Miracles ought to have made them enquire, and ſo remove that doubt.

Jeſus Chriſt taught neither againſt God, nor *Moſes*; but *Antichriſt* and the falſe Prophets openly or by Implication have taught, and will teach Doctrines contrary to God, and to *Jeſus Chriſt*. *Moſes* foretold *Jeſus Chriſt*, with a Charge to hear, and follow him: *Jeſus Chriſt* foretold *Antichriſt* with an Injunction to reject and not follow him. God never permits falſe Miracles, or Miracles to confirm a Falſhood, but where he at the ſame time performs greater in Confirmation of the Truth: As in *Ægypt* betwixt *Moſes* and the *Ægyptian* Sorcerers; and as will be betwixt *Elias* and *Antichriſt*.

From what I have ſaid it will appear, that the way not to be deceiv'd by Lying Wonders, is to conſider the Purport of the Doctrines, they advance, that is, whether it be to deſtroy the true Notion of God, in ſetting up another ſupreme Power, or in another Manner, than Reaſon, or Religion has taught us, or in giving us a new *Meſſias* or Teacher of Doctrines contrary to thoſe already confirm'd to us by Reaſon, and by Miracles, and of whom we have been ſufficiently forewarn'd by the true *Meſſias*, own'd and aſſur'd by the Hand and Power of God.

Thus much I have preſum'd to add to what you have ſpoke of Miracles; tho' I confeſs it amounts to no more than the bringing what you

you have ſaid to Particulars, and to a through Conſideration. I do therefore deſire you to proceed to that Glorious Building, which you deſign'd to lay on this Foundation.

What I was to build on it (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) was the Certainty of *Reveal'd Religion*.

If I were apt to cavil (interrupted *Pleonexus*) and were not ſufficiently convinc'd in my ſelf of the Truth of *Chriſtianity*, I wou'd make here two or three Objections, and however, ſince it may be of uſe to ſome of the Company, by giving you the Opportunity of clearing all Scruples about *Reveal'd Religion*, I will run the hazard of your Cenſures in making them. I do ſuppoſe, that you will ſay, (what I have heard urg'd) that *Revelation* was to reſtore Man to the primitive Innocence of his Nature; or to bring him back from wandering in Error to the true way of Life. But I muſt tell you what has been objected to this, *viz.* That it does not ſeem ſuitable to the Wiſdom of God to go ſo far about, and to do that by the Sufferings of his only begotten Son, the Torments and Death of his Apoſtles, and Martyrs which he might have compaſs'd by one ſingle Act of his Will, or to ſpeak more Philoſophically by his *Volition*. Since that had been ſufficient to have converted the whole World, and to have recall'd the primitive Purity of Man's Nature, which Revelation has not done.

The ſecond Objection is, that Revelation ſeems to imply a Mutability in God, which is contrary to his Divine Nature. For firſt, to fix in Man a natural Law, ſufficient for his Happineſs, and next to change that for the Law of *Moſes* deliver'd in Thunder and Lightning, and confirmed by Miracles, and that for a few in a ſmall

Country

Country; and then, as weary of that, as insufficient, to produce, and promulgate the Gospel, with fresh Miracles to destroy that Law which he had deliver'd in the Terror of Thunder and Lightning, and the magnificence of Miracles, shews in my poor Opinion a strange Mutability, which is a strong Objection against all, at least against all *Revelations* but one. I know this Gentleman has hinted, and you have said, that the *Revelation*, and Law of *Moses*, and Christ is the same, but that does not yet appear to me to be so.

Your first Objection, (replyed *Christophil*) seems to be a mixture of Sarcasm, and Inconsideration; the Turn you give it is the first, and the matter the latter. For it is grounded on a Want of Reflection on the nature of Mankind, which I have sufficiently shown to be free in its Actions and Opinions, But for God to have done what you propose, and in the manner, you wou'd have had him, had been to have exerted a new Creation, and to have alter'd the Nature of Man, by acting without Regard to the Freedom of his Agency, which wou'd be to make God to be mutable indeed. But Providence took a Course more equal, and more adapted to the Humane Nature, to Work on his Will, that is, by Perswasion, Example, and Precepts: by proposing Rewards able to excite, and Punishments sufficient to deter any sensible Reflecter from a Breach of his Law, which, if observ'd, must of course bring Mankind to their primitive State of Happiness and Innocence. Infinite Goodness, therefore took the strongest, and most Efficacious means, and most agreeable to our Nature, in sending his only Son, with Miracles to advance, and by his Death to confirm the Doctrines, that he had eternally fixt, as the measure of our Happi-

ness,

neſs, and which Mankind had univerſally in the moſt material Parts forſaken.

If Man had preſerv'd himſelf Maſter of diſintereſs'd Reaſon, and made uſe of thoſe Lights, which God had planted in every Heart, there had not been perhaps ſo great a Neceſſity, of one Miracle for the Reſtoration of his Laws, ſufficiently demonſtrable in the Divinity of his Doctrines, or even of ſending any new *Revelation*. But ſince, (as we ſhall ſhow) by his Fall from God, and his general Subjection to the meer Animal Paſſions this cou'd not poſſibly be; Revelation was abſolutely neceſſary. But my Anſwer to your ſecond Objection will bring in that more at large.

Your ſecond Objection is fully, as, weak as your former, for it ariſes from your Ignorance of what the Laws of *Moſes* and *Chriſt* are; you muſt remember, that I have prov'd, that the Sum and Subſtance of the Law of Nature or Reaſon, is Juſtice to our Neighbour, and our ſelves, and Piety to God; the latter ſecuring, and enforcing the former: now 'tis evident, that the two Tables of the *Moſaick* Law, tend to the very ſame End; Nay, I may ſay, by the Authority of Chriſt himſelf, that all the Law and the Prophets are the Loving God above all Things, and our Neighbour as our ſelves. Laſtly, If we will believe the Giver of the third Law *Jeſus Chriſt* our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour, this was likewiſe the End, and Aim of the Goſpel. So that the three Laws of Nature, of *Moſes*, and of *Chriſt* were one and the ſame individual Law. But to examine this more particularly, I will begin with the Law of *Moſes*, having already run through that of Nature.

I muſt once more recall to your Mind what I ſaid at the Concluſion of the Law of *Reaſon*; where I made it appear, that the general depravation of Mankind from thoſe Eternal Laws, ſprung from the Loſs of their chief Obligation, the Knowledge of God. For Man forſook the Love of God firſt, and then fell into *Idolatry*, which let looſe the Wilder Appetites of the Animal and Corporeal Nature, and ſo devour'd all that was truly good, and Virtuous. I confeſs it is highly amazing to reflect how it was poſſible, that Man cou'd ever indulge ſo monſtrous an Infidelity, but the Evidence of Matter of Fact, that he did ſo, is likewiſe an Evidence of the faln ſtate of Man.

I do not remember any Mention of Idolatry among the Vices of the Antedeluvian World; and I believe that it is pretty plain from the *Scripture*, that it ſpread by ſlow Degrees after the Flood; for we find *Abimelech* feared God. And when *Jacob* went into *Egypt* he found *Joſeph* at the Head of Affairs; ſo that *Egypt*, the Mother of Superſtition, had not then been guilty of that Spiritual Whoredom, at leaſt not ſo far as to have it generally to prevail. But by the encreaſe of People, Power, and Pride, and the Tricks of Deſigning Men in perverting the *Hieroglyphicks* (firſt meant for Inſtruction in the Attributes of one Deity) into Plurality of Gods, they loſt the Noble uſe of Reaſon in the Acknowledgment, and Adoration of one God. And when all the Nations round about had done the ſame ſo far, as totally to baniſh the Knowledge, and Worſhip of one God, on which all Moral Duties depended, the living God choſe *Moſes* by an ignorant, and ſlaviſh People to ſhow it was his Work, by the Wonders he

did

did for them, to reſtore the Uſe of Reaſon, and the primitive Laws of Nature to their firſt Luſtre and Force.

But that you may not depend on my Repreſentation of the Matter, I will give it you in the Words of St. *Paul* in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*; where it will evidently appear, that the Loſs of the true Knowledge of God made way for the Breach of all the Laws of Nature, and which cou'd not be perfectly reſtor'd without the compleation of Revelation in the *Goſpel*.

I ſhall begin with the 16th Verſe of the firſt Chapter. *For I am not aſham'd of the Goſpel of* Chriſt, *for it is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, to the* Jews *firſt, and alſo to the* Greeks; *for therein is the Righteouſneſs of God reveal'd, from Faith to Faith, as it is written the juſt ſhall live by Faith; for the Wrath of God is reveal'd from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs, and Unrighteouſneſs of Men; who hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs: Becauſe what may be known of God is manifeſt in them, for God has ſhown it unto them. For the inviſible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things, that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead. So that they are without excuſe, becauſe when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations; and their fooliſh Heart was hardned, profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe they became Fools, and chang'd the Glory of the incorruptible, into an Image made like unto corruptible Man, and to Birds, and four footed Beaſts and creeping things. Wherefore alſo God gave them up to Uncleanneſs through the Luſts of their own Hearts; to diſhonour their own*

Bodies between themſelves; who chang'd the Truth of God into a Lie, and worſhip'd, and ſerv'd the Creature more, than the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever Amen. For this Cauſe God gave them up unto vile Affections; for even their Women did change the natural uſe unto that which is againſt Nature. And likewiſe alſo the Men leaving the natural uſe of the Women burn'd in their Luſts one towards another, Men with Men working that which is unſeemly; and receiving in themſelves that Recompence of their Error, which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind, to do thoſe things which are not Convenient. Being fill'd with all Unrighteouſneſs, Fornication, Wickedneſs, Covetouſneſs, Maliciouſneſs, full of Envy, Murther, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whiſperers, Backbiters, Haters of God; deſpiteful, Proud, Boaſters, Inventers of Evil Things; diſobedient to Parents; without Underſtanding; Covenant Breakers, without Natural Affection; Implacable, Unmerciful; who knowing the Judgments of God (that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of death) not only do the ſame, but have Pleaſure in thoſe that do them.

St. *Paul* has here enumerated all the Breaches of the Law of Nature, and attributes them juſtly to Idolatry, or the Want of the Knowledge of God; and gives a lively Deſcription of the State of Mankind before the Revelation of *Moſes* all over the World. Wherefore we ſee, that there was no way of reſtoring the Law of Nature but by *Revelation*, nor any way of recommending that but by Miracles, as we ſhall ſee more at large, when we have taken a View of the Law of *Moſes*.

If

If we look for the old Law in the Books of *Moſes*, that is through all *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*, and *Deuteronomy*, and through all the Prophets, we ſhall find it regard that Diviſion made in the two Tables. The firſt Comprehends or teaches us our Duty to God directly contrary to the Abominations of Idolatry; and the ſecond our Duty to our Neighbour and our ſelves.

Let us begin with the 20th. Chapter of *Exodus*, from the firſt verſe, to the eighteenth, which contains the ten Commandments, which I have no need to repeat, they being known to thoſe, that do not mind them, as much, as to thoſe that do. All which are directly the Principles of this firſt Law, which Mankind had loſt by their *Idolatry*. The Puniſhments, that were threatned on their Breach, recommended them the more to the *Jews*, and the reſt of the World, who ſhou'd receive theſe Divine Precepts, as their Proſelyte, and this makes them very frequently mention'd, as *Exodus Chap.* 21, 22, 23.

The ſame Doctrine is taught in the 18th and 19th Chap. of *Leviticus*; where Unnatural Luſts, and Injuſtices are forbid, which are ſo by the Law of Nature. The 20th Chap. is on the ſame, and againſt Idolatry and Superſtition. We find in the 26th the Bleſſings of thoſe who keep theſe Commandements of the Lord, and the Curſes on the Breakers of them. The third Chap. of *Deut.* begins with an Exhortation to Obedience, which is the Life of all Laws. The fifth is taken up in a Repetition of the Decalogue, and *Moſe's* receiving the Law immediately from God. In the ſixth Chap. that great Prophet cautions them againſt Idolatry, as he does almoſt every where, as the Root of all Evil, and the

Deſtruction of all the Moral Laws. *Hear, O Iſrael!* (ſays he) v. 15. *The Lord our God is One Lord, and thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might.* The Care he us'd in his Recommendation of this, and the other Moral Laws to the People of *Iſrael*, is every where plain, eſpecially from the following Verſes, 6 7. &c. *And theſe words which I command thee this day ſhall be in thy Heart, and thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine Houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the Way; and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up*, and ſo on to the 12. Then, *beware leaſt thou forget the Lord who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, and out of the Houſe of Bondage.* And verſ. 24. *Thou ſhalt not go after other Gods, of the Gods of the People round about thee.*

Again *v.* 17. &c. *You ſhall diligently keep the Commandments of the Lord your God, and his Teſtimonies and his Statutes, which he hath commanded thee. And thou ſhalt do that which is right in the ſight of the Lord, that it may be well with thee, and thou may'ſt go in and poſſeſs the good Land which the Lord ſware unto thy Fathers. And v.* 20. *And when thy Son asketh thee in time to come, ſaying, what mean the Teſtimonies, and the Statutes, and the Judgments which the Lord our God hath commanded you? Then thou ſhalt ſay unto thy Son, we were* Pharaoh's *Bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. And the Lord ſhew'd ſigns and wonders great and ſore in Egypt, upon* Pharaoh, *and upon his all Houſehold before our Eyes.*

Moſes took all this caution to convey down the Obligation of the People to God, and to keep a con-

a conſtant and Faithful Tradition of the Confirmation of theſe Laws by Miracles from thoſe very People, who ſaw them with their Eyes. All this Chapter indeed is ſpent to recommend the End of the Law *Obedience*, with Exhortations to it drawn from their Covenants with God, and the Benefits received from him. In the 22d Chap. Brotherly, or Neighbourly Love is enjoyn'd, according to the 18th and 19th Chap. of *Leviticus*—*Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*. Thus likewiſe the latter end of the 10th Chap. and all the 11th a particular ſtudy of God's Word is recommended. In the 28th Chap. the Bleſſings of *Obedience* are enumerated, as well as the Curſes for *Diſobedience*. The ſame begins the 29th Chapter.

As theſe Laws were deliver'd by *Moſes* to the People under the Threats of Puniſhments on the Neglect, or Breach of them, ſo the Puniſhments, in ſucceding times befell the Diſobedient *Iſraelites*, who conſtantly proſper'd, or were vanquiſh'd as they obſerv'd the Law, or broke it.

I ſhall now paſs from the Books of *Moſes* to ſome of the Prophets, and if I do not run through them all, 'tis becauſe it is eaſie to imagine, that thoſe I ſhall not conſider, differ not from thoſe which I ſhall here refer to. Thus in the *Proverbs*, and *Eccleſiaſtes* we find thouſands of Recommendations of Moral Virtue, with Warnings againſt, and Condemnations of Vices. In the ſame manner we every where find the Complaints of the Prophets on the vicious Breaches of the moral Law, as in *Iſaiah* Chap. 5. God's Judgments on Covetouſneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Impiety, and Injuſtice are declar'd. And *Jeremiah* in the 9th Chap. v. 3. 4. 5. &c. *And they bend*

bend their Tongue like a bow for Lyes, but they are not valiant for the Truth upon the Earth. For they proceed from Evil to Evil, and they KNOW not me, saith the Lord. Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not in any Brother, for every Brother will utterly supplant, and every Neighbour will walk with slanders (that is with the Heathen) *and they will deceive every one his Neighbour, and will not speak the Truth. They have taught their Tongues to speak Lyes, and weary themselves to commit Iniquity, Thine Habitation is in the midst of Deceit, through Deceit they refuse to know me saith the Lord.* Thus *Ezekiel* in his 22d Chapter, complains of the Sins of *Jerusalem*, in Murder and Idolatry, Lewdness, Adultery, Usury, *&c. v. 12. In thee have they taken Gifts to shed Blood. Thou hast taken Usury and Increase, and thou hast greedily gain'd of thy Neighbour by Extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God, &c.* Hosea Chap. 4. v. 1. and 2. *Hear the word of the Lord ye Children of* Israel, *for the Lord has a Controversie with the Inhabitants of the Land, because there is no Truth, nor* MERCY, *nor* KNOWLEDGE OF GOD *in the Land: By swearing, and lying, and killing and stealing they break out, and Blood touches Blood.* Mich. Chap. 2. v. 1. 2. *Woe to them that devise Iniquity, and work Evil upon their Beds; when the morning is light they practise it, because it is in the Power of their Hands, and they covet Fields and take them by Violence, and Houses, and take them away, so they oppress a man and his House, even a man and his Heritage.* He makes the same Complaint, Chap. 7. *And* Habakkuck, *threatens the* Chaldeans *with Judgments for Ambition, Avarice, Cruelty, &c.*

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Chap. 2. v. 5. 6. &c. to 13. *Yea alſo becauſe he tranſgreſſeth by Wine, he is a proud Man, neither keepeth at home: who enlarges his deſire as Hell, and is as Death, and cannot be ſatisfy'd; but gathereth unto him all Nations, and heapeth to him all People.* So that the Injuſtice of Tyrants, and the ambitious Invaſions of their Neighbours is threatn'd by God as well as the Ambition, &c. of private Men.

But to ſum up all that has been, or may be ſaid of the Law and the Prophets, in ſhort, I ſhall do it in the Words of our Saviour. *And JESUS anſwered him, and ſaid, the firſt of all the Commandments is, Hear O Iſrael! the Lord our God is ONE Lord, and thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Strength. This is the firſt Commandement; and the ſecond is like, namely this; Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf, there is none other Commandment greater, than theſe.* And thus before in *Matth.* 22. 36. &c. *Maſter, which is the great Commandment of the Law?* Jeſus *ſaid unto him, thou ſhalt love the Lord with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind. This is the firſt and great Commandment, and the ſecond is like unto it. Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour, as thy ſelf, on theſe two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*

This therefore is the *Moſaic* Law, or the Precepts of the firſt great *Revelation*, and in what does this differ from that Law of *Right Reaſon* or Nature, which I have before deſcrib'd? Here is the ſame Object of Worſhip, and the ſame Rules of Manners, only more obviouſly com-

compriz'd, and offer'd to the general Capacity of all Men, without the Help of Ratiocination. It was eſtabliſh'd by Wonders to ſtrike the Senſes and move the Mind: and enjoined under Penalties, and with Reward to ſet our Hopes, and our Fears as Guardians to keep our Minds ſtill upon it, which are all the moſt prevailing Motives, that could be propos'd to a rational free Creature. It has viſibly twiſted, and interwoven our Duties to God, and Man, and made them inſeparable; and ſo given the moſt ſolemn, and moſt awful Sanction to the Moral Law, that cou'd commend it to our Obedience.

To proceed to the Law of the ſecond general *Revelation*, we ſhall ſee from the *Goſpel*, and the Writings of the Apoſtles, that it was likewiſe the ſame, which muſt make your Objection of the Mutability of God fall entirely to the Ground.

But to ſhew us plainly, and beyond Contradiction, that the Law of Chriſt is the ſame as that of *Moſes*, let us hear himſelf in *Mat.* cap. 5. V. 17. *Think not that I come to deſtroy the Law and the Prophets; I am not come to deſtroy but fulfil.* "That is to compleat them, both in "the bringing the Moral Law to its higheſt Per"fection in advancing the Love of God, and our "Neighbour in the Rules of both, and alſo to "fulfill the typical Ceremonies, which related "to my coming. *Matt.* 19. 8. Shows that the Eternal Law was the Ground of the *Goſpel* where he ſays, *from the Beginning it was not ſo— He ſaith unto them*; Moſes *becauſe of the Hardneſs of your Hearts ſuffered you to put away your Wives, but from the Beginning it was not ſo.*

But

But it will yet more appear from our Saviour's ſermon on the Mount, that the *Chriſtian* Law is a divine Improvement of the *Moſaic* and Natural Laws, aiming at the ſame Things more forcibly, and with greater Perfection. *Matt. 5. v. 20. &c. For I ſay unto you, that unleſs your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the* Scribes, *and* Phariſees, *you ſhall in no Caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Ye have heard, that it was ſaid by them of old Time, Thou ſhalt not kill; and whoſoever ſhall Kill ſhall be in danger of Judgment. But I ſay unto you, whoſoever is angry with his Brother without a Cauſe, ſhall be in danger of Judgment. And whoſoever ſhall ſay to his Brother* Racha, *ſhall be in danger of the Counſel; but whoſoever ſhall ſay thou fool, ſhall be in danger of Hell Fire. Therefore if thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and thou remember, that thy Brother has ought againſt thee, leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way firſt be reconcil'd to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.*

Is it poſſible for any thing more to be added to this particular Precept of *thou ſhalt not kill*, for here all the Steps and Provocations to Anger are entirely cut off, by Penalties on all the degrees that lead us to the Deſtruction of one another; and all imaginable Meaſures laid down for the common ſecurity of Mankind, and the promoting Mutual Love, by letting us know, that we cannot be acceptable to God, while we are at Enmity with our Neighbour.

But to proceed, v. 2. 7. &c. *You have heard that it was ſaid by them of old time— thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, but I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looketh on a Woman to luſt after her, has committed Adultery already, with her in his Heart.* This takes

takes away all the inſenſible Degrees by which this Injuſtice creeps on Men, by beginning with the Looks, by which the Deſires are form'd; for when they, by Indulgence, grow ſtrong, Men ſeldom ſtop before the execution of the Crime: when once we have indulg'd the Eye in looking on a fine Woman, it often puts it out of our Power to baniſh a Paſſion, we are no longer Maſters of. But there is nothing leſs difficult, than to withdraw the Eye on the firſt Glances, and ſo prevent a Guilt, ſo injurious to our Neighbour, and by Conſequence hateful to God.

In ſhort, the reſt of this divine Sermon is to recommend our Duty to God, and our Neighbour, againſt Hypocriſie, and Injuſtice, and the like. Thus *Matt.* 19. 16. our Bleſſed Saviour enjoins the Obſervation of the Decalogue, as the ſure way to obtain eternal Life, *Matt.* 22. 36, 37, 38, &c. *Maſter* (ſays one of the *Phariſees*) *which is the great Commandment in the Law? Jeſus ſaid unto him, thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, this is the firſt, and great Commandment, and the ſecond is like to it, thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* The ſame is confirm'd *Mark* 12. 29. 31, 32, &c. and *Luke* 10. 25, 26, &c. and 18. 18. *John* 13. 34. *A new Commandment I give unto you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you alſo love one another; by this ſhall all Men know that you are my Diſciples, if you love one another,* which he repeats cap. 15. v. 12. where, after he has told the Apoſtles, that to love him is to keep his Commandments, he ſays, *this is my Commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved*

you,

you. This he repeats again, Ver. 17. He had before commanded us to love our Enemies, *Matt.* 5. 4. and cap. 7. 12. he ſets us an excellent Rule of Juſtice to our Neighbour in theſe Words— *Therefore all things whatſoever you wou'd, that Men ſhou'd do to you, do you ſo to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets:* Chriſt rewards every Man according to his *Works.* Mat. 16. 27. *For the Son of Man ſhall come in the Glory of his Father, with his Angels, and then he ſhall reward every Man according to his Works.* Rom. 2. 6. *Who will render to every Man according to his Deeds.* Pet. 1. 17. *And if you call on the Father, who without reſpect of Perſons judgeth according to every Man's Work, &c.*

But to bring yet a ſtronger Proof, if poſſible, of this being the Doctrine of the *Goſpel*, let us ſee if our Saviour do not make our Conduct to one another, the Meaſure of his Sentence, at the general Judgment. *Matt.* 25. from v. 31. to the End of the Chapter. *The Son of Man ſhall come in his Glory and all the Holy Angels with him, then ſhall he ſit upon the Throne of his Glory, &c.* and v. 34. *Then ſhall the King ſay to them on his Right Hand, come ye Bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the Foundation of the World, for I was an hungred, and you gave me Meat; I was thirſty, and you gave me Drink: I was a ſtranger, and you took me in: Naked, and you Cloathed me; I was ſick, and you viſited me; I was in Priſon, and you came unto me. Then ſhall the Righteous ſay, &c.*

I ſuppoſe this is ſufficient to ſhow that the Aim of the *Goſpel* is the ſame as that of the Law of *Moſes*, viz. the *LOVE of God and of our Neighbour.*

The

The *Goſpel* indeed conſiſts of two Things, *viz. what we are to do*, and *what we are to believe*. The Belief gives force to the Action, and the Action proves the Belief, which cannot ſubſiſt without it. *The Love of God is not in him who being able doth not help, ſeeing his Brother in Need*, 1 John 3. 17. 18.

I confeſs (ſaid *Pleonexus*) that from what you have ſaid it ſeems to be pretty plain, that the *Goſpel* is no new Law from that of *Moſes*, and that Juſtice and Morality are commanded, directly by it. And this made a ſober Diſſenting Miniſter tell me, that Chriſt taught not the *Chriſtian* Religion, but that of *Moſes*, and therefore that we ought to ſeek the *Chriſtian* Faith in St. *Paul*, and the Apoſtles.

St. *Paul* tells you (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) that you ſhou'd be no further Imitators of him, than he is of *Chriſt*; but I ſhall here ſhew, that he cloſely imitates *Chriſt* in this Doctrine on theſe Points. As is evident almoſt from every one of his *Epiſtles*, nay, almoſt of every Chapter in them: ſee *Rom.* 13. 7, 8, 9, 10. *Render therefore to all their dues, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Cuſtom to whom Cuſtom; Fear to whom Fear; Honour to whom Honour. Owe no Man any thing but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, thou ſhalt not Kill, thou ſhalt not Steal, thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs; thou ſhalt not Covet; and if there be any other Commandment it is briefly comprehended in this ſaying, thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf. Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour, therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* 1 Cor. 5. The beginning of the Chapter is againſt Lewdneſs, and v. 9. 10. *&c. I wrote*

to

to you in an Epiſtle not to company with Fornicators; yet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World, or with the Covetous or Extortioner, or with Idolaters, for then muſt ye needs go out of the World. And now I have written unto you not to keep Company if any Man, that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Coveteous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one, no not to eat. After he has reprimanded the *Corinthians* in the 6th Chapter for their Litigiouſneſs, and wronging one another, he ſays, *v.* 9. 10. 11. *Know ye not that the Unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God? be not deceiv'd, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abuſers of themſelves with Mankind; nor Thieves, nor Coveteous, nor Extortioners ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* Galat. Chap. 5. *v.* 14. *For all the Law is fulfill'd in one Word, even in this, thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf.* And before the end of the Chapter he enumerates the Works of the Fleſh which they, who walk in the Spirit, that is holily, cannot be guilty of, as *v.* 19. *&c. Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry, Witch-craft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenneſs and ſuch like of which I tell you before, as I have alſo told you in time paſt, that they, who do ſuch things ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. But the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs Temperance. Againſt ſuch there is no Law. And they that are* Chriſt's *have Crucify'd the Fleſh, with the Affections and Luſts. If we live in the Spirit, let us not be deſirous of Vain*

Glory

Glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Tell me *Pleonexus*, does not St. *Paul* hitherto admirably imitate the Doctrine of *Chriſt*? Or can you ſay, that he ſets up any new or different Law, from that which his Bleſſed Maſter taught? Well then, to proceed; the 5th Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians* is all of the ſame Purport, warning us of ſeveral moral Duties which he proſecutes in the ſixth. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. and 9. *That no Man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter, becauſe that the* Lord *is the Avenger of all ſuch, as we alſo have forewarn'd you and teſtify'd*, &c. *But as touching Brotherly Love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye your ſelves are taught of God to love one another.* And in the firſt Chapter of his Epiſtle to *Tim.* he ſuppoſes a *Chriſtian* ſo pure, as not to fall under the Law, which was made, as he affirms for the lawleſs and Diſobedient, and then runs over the ſeveral Breaches of the moral Law, and great part of his laſt Chapter to the *Hebrews* recommends the ſame.

With St. *Paul* the other Apoſtles agree in thoſe Epiſtles we have of theirs. Firſt St. *James* Chap. 1. *v.* 22. *Be ye doers of the Word, not Hearers only deceiving your ſelves.* And all the ſecond Chapter is ſpent in recommending our Duty, acting morally, kindly and lovingly with our Neighbour, firſt that it is not agreeable to the Chriſtian Profeſſion to fawn on the Rich, and to deſpiſe the Poor, but that we are to be merciful and loving. That we ſhould not boaſt of Faith without Deeds, which is but a Dead Faith; nay, the Faith of Devils. Thus in the 4th Chap. he tells us, that it is our Duty to reſiſt Coveteouſneſs, Pride, Intemperance, Detraction, Judging

ing raſhly of their Neighbour, and the like.

The firſt Epiſtle of St. *Peter* Chap. 2. *Wherefore laying aſide all Malice, and all Guile, and Hypocriſies, and Envies and evil ſpeakings.* And from the 12. *v.* he recommends ſeveral moral Duties. Chap. 3. *v.* 8. *Finally be ye all of one Mind, having Compaſſion one of another, love as Brethren, be pitiful, be courteous,* &c. thus in the Fourth Chapter he exorts them from Sin by the Example of *Chriſt.*

I ſhall conclude this Enquiry with ſeeing what St. *John* ſays on the ſame point, *Ep.* 1. Chap 2. *v.* 3. &c. *And hereby do we know that we know him (God) if we keep his Commandments. He that ſayeth I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments is a Lyar, and the Truth is not in him. But he that keepth his Word, in him verily is the Love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him* 7. *Brethren, I write no new Commandment unto you, but an old Commandment which ye had* from the Beginning. *v.* 9. *He that ſaith he is in the Light, and hateth his Brother, is in Darkneſs ev'n untill now. He that loveth his Brother abideth in the Light, and there is no occaſion of ſtumbling in him.* He is yet plainer as to this, in the 3d. Chap. v. 14, &c. *We know that we have paſs'd from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren: he that loveth not his Brother, abideth in Death. Whoſoever hateth his Brother is a Murtherer, and you know that no Murtherer hath eternal Life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the Love of God, becauſe he laid down his Life for us, and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren. But whoſo hath this Worlds goods, and ſeeth his Brother have need, and ſhutteth up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him,* how dwelleth the Love of God in him? *Chap.* 4.

v. 15. &c. *Whosoever shall confess, that* Jesus *is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known, and believed the* Love *which God has to us.* God is Love, *and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our* Love *made perfect, that we may have Boldness in the Day of Judgment, because as he is, so are we in this World. There is no fear in* Love: *but perfect Love casteth out fear, because* Fear *hath Torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in* Love. *We loved him, because he first loved us. If a Man say I love God and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar: for he that loveth not his Brother, whom he hath seen, how can he Love God, whom he hath not seen. And this Commandment have we from him,* that he who loveth God, love his Brother also.

I have been the larger in this last Quotation from St. *John*, because he has here interwoven the two Duties of Religion, and shown how unseperable they are, that is the *Love of God*, and *of our Neighbours*, denying positively that the first can be without the last. I hope therefore from all these Texts, that it is plain, that the whole Current of the *New Testament* as is clearly the very same Doctrine, which *Moses* deliver'd to the *Israelites*, and I hope it is evident that this was the same with the Law of Nature or Reason; so it follows, that God has not shown any Mutability by giving us these two latter Laws of *Revelation*, since they differ not from that primitive Law, Established by God in the Creation of Man.

But Sir, (interrupted *Pleonexus*) if *Reason* cou'd bring us to a Knowledge of our Duty without *Revelation*, where was the Necessity of a *Reve-*

a *Revelation*? So that by your making the three Laws the ſame to avoid the deſtroying the Immutability of God; by making him do a ſuperfluous Thing, you deſtroy his Wiſdom.

If Man (reply'd *Chriſtophil*) had never faln from his ſtate of Innocence; and his Reaſon had retain'd its Native Force, and Vigour, your Objection had born ſome weight, for then thoſe *Revelations* had been ſuperfluous, and by conſequence never had been. But ſince the uſe of Right Reaſon was almoſt wholly loſt in the Depravitys of Mankind; and the univerſal Slavery to the Paſſions and Corporeal Impreſſions was ſo great, that thoſe very few, who made the neareſt approaches to it, argu'd from prejudices of Cuſtom, and receiv'd Maxims, which wanted the Certainty they ſuppos'd in them, they never did nor ever cou'd arrive at the Knowledge of Truth in ſo perfect a Degree, as was agreeable to the Divine Nature, till they were deliver'd from that ſtate of Darkneſs, which had excluded the light of the Knowledge of God, the very Fundamental of all the moral Law.

Beſides thoſe very Advances to the Truth, which we diſcover in the *Greek* and *Roman* Authors, may be traced from the Firſt *Revelation*, tho' debauch'd and confounded with the Theology of the reigning Polytheiſm of their Countries. The moſt ancient of the *Greek* Philoſophers, having travelled into *Ægypt* and *Caldea*, in both which places liv'd *Jews* inſtructed in the Laws of Truth; eſpecially after their Captivity in *Babylon*, their Religion was more known, and in probability might ſo convey ſome light to thoſe diſtant *Heathens*, by their firſt Teachers Enquiries into theſe Matters in their Travels. But as for the *Romans* we know they all built

on what they found among the *Greeks*. But this was but a few, a very ſmall handful of Men, that had this ſmall Light, and never aim'd at ſpreading it further, than their immediate Diſciples. The reſt of the World was in profound Ignorance, and Slavery to domineering Vices.

Let any Man of common Senſe, but take a view of the State of the World when *Moſes* appear'd, and he will eaſily find, that he cou'd never have prevail'd in that narrow Reſtoration of the Law of Nature without Miracles, The worſhip of the true God was almoſt every where aboliſh'd, or loſt, without which Mankind cou'd never be ſafe, nor happy. For all the Precepts of Reaſon, which the Law of Nature gave them, loſt all their Force, when their dependance on God, and the Sanction they receiv'd from him, was quite vaniſhed from their very Notions: And ſo nothing but the Power of political Inſtitutions, to oblige their obſervation remain'd, which we ſee every day evaded by the Cunning, Power, or Wealth of Particulars.

But when the Mind has loſt the Love, Fear, and Knowledge of God, and in thoſe all the nobleſt Aims of a rational Being, all the ſureſt Tyes to mutual Love and Aſſiſtance, that is all the Security and Happineſs of Life, it had no way to recover it ſelf out of that Darkneſs, but by the Power and Goodneſs of God; and that by means agreeable to our Nature, which was *free* tho' Corrupted. It was worthy therefore of the Goodneſs of God, by Miracles to reſtore that Law, without which Man cou'd not arrive at the End, and Aim of his Creation; which is ſo far from being Contrary to any one Attribute of God, that it ſoveraignly anſwers them all.

In

In this Univerſal Night of Humane Reaſon, that had overſhadow'd almoſt the whole Race of Man, God in his Infinite Goodneſs and Mercy, choſe *Moſes* to manifeſt himſelf and his Law to a weak, and ignorant People, that had loſt their Spirit and their Underſtanding in a long and painful Slavery, and therefore the moſt unlikely in the World to be capable of effecting a Revolution ſo wonderful and amazing, as was brought about by *Moſes* in the Delivery of the Children of *Iſrael* from *Egypt*, without the aſſiſting hand of God, by which help, *Moſes* brought them to the Knowledge of the moſt high God, and eſtabliſh'd a Covenant with them; in which he plainly (as I have ſhown) reſtor'd the Law of Nature or Reaſon, which begun with Mankind, nor can end while he has Being in the World.

But notwithſtanding the Law of *Proſelytes*, the *Iſraelites* were ſo far from ſpreading this divine Doctrine among their Neighbours, that they frequently fell from it themſelves; and Ten Tribes upon their defection from the Line of *David*, fell from the Church, and ſet up other Gods, or at leaſt forſook the true Worſhip of God. Their diſtinction from all other People in time deſtroy'd their Zeal for *Proſelytes*; and tho' at firſt it was the Remedy againſt Infection from the Idolatry, that ſurrounded them, prov'd Fewel to their Pride, which gave them other Methods of Righteouſneſs, than thoſe preſcribed by the *Decalogue*, or the *Moral Law*, deliver'd in Thunder and Lightning. For the Ceremonial Law, which was partly Typical, and partly to draw the People to God, was not deliver'd in ſo dreadful, and awful a Manner, tho' in the *Phariſaical* Age of the *Jews* it eat

up all the other, as is evident from the *Gospel.*

I have already consider'd how the *Heathen* World was lost in *Idolatry*, and the Ignorance of the true God, and by Consequence of the chief Part of the Rational Religion, which cou'd never have been restored but by the Miracles of *Moses* and *Christ*. For Men having generally forsaken the true Light of pure Reason, and devoted themselves to the *Ignes fatui*, which they had substituted in its Place, it was impossible for Men ever to recover that true Light by any means meerly Humane.

It must be confess'd that among the *Heathens* there were some particular Men, who made very near Approaches to Right Reason, (whether that were by the means of the already establish'd Revelation of the *Jews* as I have observ'd, or by a peculiar Favour of God) and by the utmost Application discover'd great Part of the Law of Nature, founded in Reason; and that there was one Supream and Eternal Cause of all things, who naturally, essentially, or necessarily existed, and on whom all created Beings had an entire Dependance. Yet, *First*, we never find that they ever arriv'd to the *Love of God*, nor *Secondly*, ever divested themselves so far of the Prejudices of Custom, or receiv'd Opinions, as to have adequate Notions of things, that every way answer'd Right Reason, and that superexcellent Being, which even their corrupted Reason led them to a wonderful, tho' not perfect View of.

The several Sects of Philosophers, which had sprung from Contemplation in *Athens*, and from their Travels into *Asia* and *Egypt*, had run the considering Men into, as many absurdi-

ties

ties almoſt as the Vulgar, tho' of a more ſubtile and refin'd Nature. For each Author of a Sect aiming at a Name, and Glory from the Diſtinction of his Followers, and Doctrine more, than by his Zealous Purſuit of Truth, advanc'd ſuch a Multiplicity of Precarious and Contradictory Principles, that the ſeveral Diſciples were by them confin'd in their Reaſonings, and could not go out of their Track, tho' call'd by the moſt evident Truth; which made *Cicero* ſay, that there was no Opinion ſo abſurd, which ſome of the Philoſophers had not held. This dogmatical way of the Philoſophers bound up the Minds of their Diſciples with Prejudices, as inſuperable, and as falſe, as thoſe of the People.

Thus we ſee them all arguing from the firſt Principles of each Sect, and always keeping in View of their *Poſtulata*, even in their fineſt Reaſonings; this appears from *Cicero*'s book of the nature of the Gods, (to omit others) and his other Philoſophical Treatiſes, where he is moſt free, and diſengag'd. In the forenam'd Book, he ſhows a perfect skill in the ſeveral Opinions of the Philoſophers on that Point: He gives us three perfect Characters of the three prevailing Sects of that Time, the *Stoicks*, *Epicureans*, and *Academicks*, or *Scepticks*, for ſuch is his *Cotta*, to whom, as his Favourite, he gives the Advantage of anſwering both the *Epicureans*, and *Stoicks*, tho' ſo weakly, that it is ſcarce worthy a Man, much leſs of a Lover of Wiſdom; ſo far was Right Reaſon from taking Place, even where they profeſs'd to think of nothing but Reaſon.

Theſe Philoſophers, who were not, or pretended not to be dogmatical, were ſo far from

arriving at, or promoting Truth, that they perfectly deſtroy'd the very Thing, while they ſtrove to make every thing, nay, laid it down as a Principle, that every thing was, uncertain, which was equally fooliſh, and Vain. For they aſſerted this one Maxim, *that all was uncertain*, as a certain Principle, on which they built their whimſical Wantonneſs of Argumention. And this ſprung from their unweigh'd Conſideration of the bounded Knowledge of Man; concluding, that becauſe he did not know all things, he knew nothing.

Socrates ſeems almoſt the only Man of the Heathen Antiquity, that appear'd ſincerely to aim at the Truth; and it is certain, that he in ſome Degree or Meaſure arriv'd at it. He ſaw the Loquacious Oſtentation of the *Sophiſts* of *Greece*, and therefore, ſet up a plain eaſie way of confuting their *Syllogiſtical Jargon*, by a Method that led directly to Truth, and the fair Deciſion of Controverſie. His honeſt Intention was rewarded with the finding out the Unity of the Deity, and had the Happineſs to die a Martyr to that noble Truth. For tho' he had ſo great a Principle of Honeſty, and the Reputation of the wiſeſt Man from the very Oracle of *Apollo* himſelf, tho' I ſay, his Authority was built on the very ſtrongeſt Superſtition of their Religion, yet his defending, and endeavouring to promote the Knowledge of *One God* coſt him his Life, without making any Numerous, if any Converts from the *Polytheiſm*. And this not in *Greece* only, but in *Athens* it ſelf, the very Center of Wit, Learning, and Politeneſs, the Seat and Rendezvous of curious Enquirers; the Retreat of the very Avarice of Novelty, tho' there cou'd be no Opinion ſo very irrational as

the Idolatry, that *Socrates* oppos'd. But that and other Doctrines deſtructive of Truth, were every where ſpread, and eſtabliſh'd by an immemorial Preſcription, too ſtrong for all the Reaſon and Authority of *Socrates* to vanquiſh.

The other Philoſophers, who ſucceeded *Socrates*, as *Plato*, *Xenophon*, *&c.* confin'd their Notions about God, either to obſcurer Words, or in ſome Meaſure to the Vulgar Opinions. Beſides, if they had arriv'd at the Truth, and wou'd have taught it to their Diſciples without Veil, or Corruption, their *Gymnaſia*, and *Gardens* confin'd their Diſcoveries to their immediate Hearers, and being no part of the Religion of the Country, wou'd be look't on as fine Speculation, not to be reduc'd to practice, and ſo by conſequence cou'd never undeceive the People; ſo that there was no poſſibility of ever reſtoring the uſe of Right Reaſon, and by Conſequence, the Law of Nature, founded in the true Knowledge of God, by the meer force of Man, without the immediate Revelation of God, and that recommended by Miracles.

This was the State of the *Pagan* World at the coming of *Chriſt*, and as I have hinted that of the *Jews* was not much better, by their adhefion to *Phariſaical* Traditions, and outward Forms, and Ceremonies, without any Regard to the true ſubſtance of Religion, *the love of God, and their Neighbour*. They had ſet up a Righteouſneſs, which was not the Righteouſneſs of God, but a convenient Union betwixt their Conſcience, and the Breach of their Law, which reconcil'd Contraries, and made God the Author of Evil, and the Protector, and the Favourer of the Wicked. *Pride*, and *Hypocriſie*, with its natural Companion, or rather Director, *Avarice* had

had entirely engroſs'd the principal, or at leaſt the largeſt Part of the *Jews*. From hence by their Correſpondence with the *Aſiatick* Greeks, and with other Nations, mixt with their own erroneous Traditions, they had advanc'd Principles agreeable to the End, and Aim of their Lives, Injuſtice, and Impiety. For their prevailing Paſſions, not their Reaſon interpreted the Law. In ſhort, all the Corruptions of the *Heathen*, except their formal Idolatry, were among them; ſo that having ſpread a falſe Method of underſtanding the Law, and fixt Principles contrary to the ſame, the Common Effects of Prejudice, of Preſcription, or Cuſtom equally excluded them from the poſſibillity of a Return to a true Notion of Things, without the ſecond Revelation of *Chriſt Jeſus* our Lord.

To confirm what you have ſaid (interrupted *Chriſtophorus*) I ſhall add a few Conſiderations on the ſame Head.

The *Jews* were plung'd into Worldly Thoughts, that God loved their Father *Abraham*, that is his Body or Fleſh, and for his ſake all his numerous Progenie, and that this partial Love was the only Motive of his multiplying and diſtinguiſhing them from all other People of the Earth, not ſuffering them to mix, or intermingle by Marriage, or Coalition with the Deſcendants, or Off ſpring of any other Head, or Fountain of Nations. That for this Cauſe only he brought them out of *Egypt* with ſuch Signs, and Wonders done in their Favour; fed them with Manna in the Deſart, gave them a Land of Plenty, Kings, and a well built Temple in it to offer Beaſts for Victims, and that they were purifi'd with the Effuſion of their Blood, and that a *Meſſias* ſhou'd come to render them Maſters of the World. The

The *Jews* were us'd to great and wonderful Miracles, and they look't on the dividing the Red Sea, and their obtaining the Land of *Canaan*, as the Minature (as I may say) of the great Wonders to be perform'd by the *Messias*, from whom they expected more prodigious and evident Works of Power, esteeming those of *Moses*, but as the Morning Star of their promis'd Emperor.

These carnal *Jews* had no Apprehensions of the Grandure, and Lowliness of their foretold *Messias*, the Prognosticks of whom they found in their Prophets. They suppos'd he wou'd be an eternal King, that wou'd reign over them for ever, but had no Notion of his Death, and the Abjectness of his Temporal State here on Earth. They had such a Passion for the Figures, and Types of him, and were taken up so wholly with them, that they lost the Reality, and knew him not when he came, tho' he in every particular answered the Prophesies of him, because they had misapprehended them.

This made them such Enemies to the Spiritual Sense of their Prophets, whom they almost ador'd for that carnal meaning, which they put upon them, which was the very Cause that they were such Foes to the *Messias*, who fulfill'd them in a poor dejected Appearance, which defeated their avaricious, and ambitious Hopes; from which they had promis'd themselves the Subjection of the tributary World. Being therefore so intent on the expectation of Carnal Goods, they lost all Thoughts and all Advantages of the real; they consider'd not that their blind desire of Wealth, and Power, were inconsistent with the Love of God, and their Neighbours, with Faith, and with Charity.

Thus

Thus while they had a falſe, and ungodly expectation of the *Meſſias*, they plac'd their ſupream Happineſs in the Goods of this World, and by Conſequence had no Regard to the two Fundamentals of their Religion, *viz. To love God above all Things, and their Neighbour, as themſelves.* For they lov'd Wealth, and Power above all Things, and only lov'd themſelves. This Principle therefore being fixt in them, there was no Poſſibility, by following that Road, of their coming into the right Path of the true, and eternal Religion. There was therefore in regard ev'n of the *Jews*, a Neceſſity of the coming of our Saviour, by Miracles to recall thoſe, who were not obſtinately, and wilfully deaf to the Truth.

There is no greater Evidence (aſſum'd *Chriſtophil* when he found the other ſilent) of the Force of the Prejudice of Opinion, and Education, than that all the *Jews* did not believe in thoſe Miracles done by *Jeſus Chriſt* and his Apoſtles; they cou'd not but all ſee, as well as *Nicodemus*, that none cou'd do thoſe things but ſuch with whom God was. The ſame will appear from the Pagan part of the World in the People of *Lyſtra*, who by the Miracles of St. *Paul*, and *Barnaby* in curing the Lame Man, ſaw, that it was beyond the Power of any humane Creature, and therefore concluded from the Dictates of their Religion, and their Notions of things, that they were two of their Gods—*lifting up their voices, ſaying, in the Speech of* Lycaonia, *the Gods are come down to us in the likeneſs of Men.* The Miracle ſtruck them, and they, therefore, immediately prepar'd ſacrifices for them as Gods, calling one *Jupiter*, and the other *Mercury*. But when their miſtaken

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Zeal was refus'd, and the Apoſtles had aſſur'd them, that they were Men like them, ſubject to the ſame Paſſions, on the Inſtigation of thoſe who got by the Superſtition of the Polytheiſm, they ſoon agreed to ſtone them. So ſtrong was Opinion, and Education even againſt a Miracle, which their Actions confeſs'd, that they thought above the Humane Power, and plainly divine.

From what has been ſaid of the deprav'd State both of the *Jews*, and the *Gentiles*, there flows an undeniable Conſequence, that without great and frequent Miracles, it had been impoſſible to have given the Chriſtian Doctrine any Footing among Mankind, I will not ſay by Men of ſuch low Fortunes, and little Learning, and Art, but indeed by any Men at all how fortunate or eloquent ſoever. So that the prevailing of the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, as we ſee it has prevail'd, is a demonſtration of the Miracles that were done to recommend and confirm it, and convince the People of it, who without them wou'd never have liſtned to any Reaſon however evident, againſt their preconceiv'd Opinions and Cuſtoms.

I think it is an invincible Proof of the Miracles of *Chriſt*, that the Doctrine they promote is founded on Reaſon, and deducible from Nature, and *Right-Reaſon*; and therefore that it was worthy the Almighty Goodneſs to work Miracles for a Doctrine ſo agreeable to his own Divine Attributes, and which he had originally eſtabliſh'd in the Nature, and for the Happineſs of Humane kind, ſo to convince the World of the Habitual Error, which had depriv'd them of the uſe of their Reaſon. The ſame Miracles confirm'd the divine Miſſion of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, by this Mark of Gods Approbation

on of what he was to deliver. For by that means he gave an undeniable Authority, and Manifeſtation of his Sanction of thoſe Laws, and to confirm the Rewards, and Puniſhments due to the Obſervance, or Breach of them; and to put an end to all Doubts of the Immortality of the Soul. For it is a plain Diſtinction betwixt the Miracles of Chriſt, and thoſe pretended Wonders of Impoſtors, that *Chriſt*'s were to reeſtabliſh the Law of Reaſon, that is eternal Truths, which aim'd directly at the end of Man's Creation, and flow'd directly from the Notion, and Knowledge of God, and highly agreeable to all his Attributes; while thoſe of Impoſtors are only to promote Doctrines and Superſtitions either deſtructive of that End, or not at all availing to it; or for ſome Mean, Worldly, and particular Intereſt or Advantage, unworthy of the aſſiſting Power of God.

You muſt pardon me if I inſiſt a little more on this Point, than perhaps you'll approve, for I muſt repeat what I have ſaid on this head, that I may put it in all its Light, and that I may omit nothing material to an Argument, which alone, in my Opinion, without the voluminous Teſtimonies of Fathers, and Hiſtorians, which require both Learning, and a long Application to be maſter of, proves the whole Chriſtian Religion beyond all Controverſie, that is if Reaſon, and Demonſtration be any Proof beyond Controverſie.

Let us therefore, once more take a View of it. Behold here the whole World obſtinately blinded in Error, and Univerſally prepoſſeſs'd by Opinion, and Prejudice againſt this Doctrine. On the other hand, our Saviour and his Apoſtles, from the loweſt and moſt deſpicable State

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of Human kind, ſet up the Chriſtian Religion, as I have deſcrib'd it, and prevail'd againſt the Proud, the Rich, and the Powerful. That is Poverty, Weakneſs, and Contempt enter'd the Field againſt, and contended with Power, Prejudice, Wealth, and Pride. Truth under all theſe Diſadvantages with Falſhood, in all its ſtrongeſt Redoubts, and Fortifications. Religion unarm'd againſt Superſtition amidſt its blind, and zealous Guards of Paſſion, Preſcription, Intereſt, *&c.* Can any rational Man, can any Man of common Senſe imagine, that ſuch Inſtruments, and by ſuch Meaſures as their Doctrine preſcrib'd, cou'd make way through them all, without the recommendation of Miracles, by them attaquing their Senſes, to awake their Judgment and Reaſon, to hear and examine the Truth and Demonſtration of their Doctrine, which juſtly carry'd indeed Conviction with it. Yet a Man, that is at all acquainted with the World, muſt know the wonderful Force of Prejudice and Education, the Power of Antiquity, the unanimous Opinion of the World, and the like; that they hoodwink Reaſon, blind the Eyes of Judgment, and invert all its Operations, which being poſſeſs'd, and taken up with falſe Principles, argues from them, as certain, and thinks it even impious to queſtion the Solidity of thoſe Fundamentals, and will find, nor acknowledge no Truth, which cannot be reduc'd to them.

This will be more plain, if we conſider how few there are even now, in a more knowing Age, and in a Nation, that is a profeſs'd Enemy to Superſtition, and a Conſtraint of Conſcience, and eſtabliſh'd in a full Liberty of Enquiry, ſo zealouſly ſetting up the ſacred Empire of Reaſon,

Reaſon, how few I ſay, even here, and now are fairly govern'd by their *Reaſon* and the Criterion, or undoubted Mark of Truth *Evidence*! How few are there, that do not examine Doctrines by the Opinions, they have already imbib'd, and judge them, falſe, or true by the Analogy they hold with the Belief of their Forefathers, or of that, in which they had been bred.

Nothing therefore but Miracles cou'd make way againſt theſe, in a Time more overwhelmed with Superſtition, and far leſs directed by Reaſon, than the preſent, as the univerſal Idolatry, that then reign'd in the World, is a ſufficient Teſtimony.

The Succeſs of the *Chriſtian* Doctrine againſt all this inexpreſſible Force of Prejudice of Judgment, and Practice, is an undeniable Proof that it was recommended by Miracles, the Neceſſity of which I have ſufficiently demonſtrated from the Event, which we ſee. All the Miracles of our Saviour, and his Apoſtles had all the Marks of true Miracles, which I and *Chriſtophorus* have laid down, the Doctrine they advanc'd, was agreeable to the Nature of God, founded in Reaſon, and directed to an End, as worthy the Conſideration of God, as the Creation of the World, or of Man, ſince it aim'd at the Reſtoration of the firſt and principal End of Man, *the true Knowledge, and Love of God, and the ſincere Love of our Neighbour*; at the baniſhing thoſe Vices, and that Unrighteouſneſs, which had deſtroy'd that Happineſs of Man, to which he was created. In ſhort, *Chriſt* did all his Miracles for ſome declar'd End, or ſome forenamed Account, and foretold them, and they were all above the Power of Man, and the common Courſe of Nature.

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As for those, that make the Apostles Impostors the Assertion is so unworthy a Man of common Sense, that it is not worth the Answering. Besides, it has been often confuted by various Arguments, as their having no Motives to pretend a Life, Miracles, Death and Resurrection, of a Founder of a Religion, which was so contrary to the Practice, and Opinions of those Times, that they cou'd promise nothing to themselves, but what they joyfully met with, that was Imprisonments, Racks, Infamy, Disgrace, and ev'n Death it self. Impostures are the Effects of vicious Aims and Designs, but nothing is more evident, than that the Aim of the Apostles was highly Just, nay Divine, and it is unaccountably odd, that so many Men of such deviliſh Principles shou'd unanimously club together to publish a notorious Lye to the Belief of the World, and yet with so Just, so Noble, and so Divine a Design and Doctrine, to promote the universal Happiness of Mankind by dispersing Error, restoring evident Truth, banishing Vice destructive of, and Preaching up Virtues conducive to the glorious Peace and Felicity of the World; Advancing the pure Love of God, and settling a true Knowledge of him, and mutual Love among Men, to that degree, that if their Doctrine were observed by all Men, there could be no Unhappiness, no Misery, nor any thing to be shun'd in the World. But besides these and other Arguments, which are us'd on this Head, which you may find in Bishop *Parker*, Dr. *Bates*, *The short Method with a Deist*, and several others, who have writ on this Subject, the difficulty wou'd still remain, how they cou'd spread this Doctrine clogg'd with these Impostures in-

plight of the general Prejudices of all Mankind no way certainly without Miracles.

If the Kings, and Emperors of the World had undertaken a thing of this Nature, there might have been a Probability of their getting some ground in Time; but that wou'd have been a way to have disappointed the Aim of Christianity, *viz.* Virtue and Piety. For if the *Gospel* had been propagated by Worldly Power, it wou'd have introduc'd among its Disciples Interest, Hypocrisie, Flattery, Envy, Malice, and all the Evils which the *Gospel* expressly is directed to remove and banish from all its Followers; for these are the Seed and Fewel of Unhappiness, and opposite to the Love of God. Nor would it have been a Manifestation of its coming from God, but have pass'd among too many for a meer Politick Institution of Man, and therefore to be no further observ'd than is consistent with our mistaken Pleasure, or Interest. On the contrary we find this Imposture, as they would have it, let a foot by a few poor, unlearned, and unpolitick Men, against the Power and the Wisdom of the World, that is the false Notions of the Philosophers, and the Eloquence of Orators, against that Worldly Interest so generally spread, and so ingrafted then in all the *Jewish* and *Pagan* World. Can any Man therefore in his Sense suppose, that this could be done without Miracles, after he has throughly weigh'd what I have said on the Head of Prejudices, or consider'd them in his own Experience? Is therefore this Doctrine of the Apostles cou'd not prevail, as it did, without Miracles to the World in general, so were Miracles necessary even to the Disciples of *Christ*, and St. *John Baptist*, since all the Doctrine of Christ depended on his Re-

surrection, which depended on the Apostles confirming their Mission and Veracity by Miracles; as that of St. *Peter*, at the *Beautiful Gate* of the Temple, mentioned in the Acts. So that, in short, it is evident, that this Doctrine of the Apostles did prevail far and near in their very time, both in *Judea* and *Greece*, *Asia*, and *Italy*, &c. against these Prejudices; it is therefore, as certain, that this could not be done without the Assistance of Miracles, as I have often urg'd already. When these Gentlemen, that own themselves Enemies to the Gospel, can shew me one Impostor recommending the same eternal Doctrine, confirming his Mission by Miracles, as clear and undeniable matter of Fact, as agreeable to all the Marks of Miracles, and that this his Doctrine has spread over any part of the World, that is considerable, by these same means and in the same way without the Humane Helps of Power and Interest, &c. I'll give up this Argument, which seems to me, as fair a Conviction, as any Mathematical Demonstration whatever, because it cannot be deny'd without an Equal Absurdity, and Contradiction to Reason and common Sense.

Your Method, (said *Christophorus*) I very much approve, since it is easie, and all contain'd in the compass of the *Bible* (that sacred Repository of all Necessary Truths) and daily Experience, and within the reach of common Sense.

The Holy *Bible*, indeed, as it is the most ancient, and most Authentick of all Books, so it is the only Book that gives us the Idea of *true Religion*, the Character of which is singular, and distinguish'd from all others by the *Love of God*, which is the Essence of Divine Worship, all other Religions being evidently false for want of that Mark.

The true Religion, I say, ought as its Mark of Verity, to oblige its Believers, to the *Love of God*, for that is nothing but the first, and highest Justice, but no Religion but the *Christian* does that. It ought besides to take Cognizance of the Passions, of our Concupiscences, and the Weakness into which Man is fain, and how incapable he was by his own meer Force and Power to arrive at true and perfect Virtue which is inseparable from the *Love of God*. True Religion ought to prescribe Remedies for our Frailty, of which Prayer is one of the Chief: The *Christian* Religion only, does all this, nor does any other Religion beg of God, that he would raise us to the Love of himself.

The *Heathen* for want of this Divine Love, and a perfect Reason, which leads to it, could not keep up to the Law of Nature, when they wanted the Motive of Obedience to God, *His Love*. But being born down, by a course of vicious Habits, to the immediate Gratification of particular Inclinations, in which if they could but escape immediate Punishment, they satisfy'd themselves in the Innocence of their Actions tho' never so unjust. But what an Abundance of Corruption and Wickedness did their very Laws allow? And how much more they did securely perpetrate by the cunning Evasion of their Political Institutions, is plain to those, who read their Historians, Poets, Customs and Antiquities. All which proceeded from their false Religion's not teaching them the *Love of God*, nor that undissolvable Knot betwixt that and the Love of our Neighbours.

To make a Religion true it ought to know our Nature, because the true Knowledge of the Nature of Man, his true Good, true

Virtue, and true Religion, are inſeparable. It ought to know the Grandure and Lowlineſs of Man, and the Reaſons of one and the other. But there is no Religion but the Chriſtian takes notice of all theſe Things; no Religion but ours knows, and teaches, that Man is at once the moſt excellent Creature, and the moſt miſerable; Reaſon exalting him to God, but Sin and an ignoble Slavery to his Paſſions, depreſſing him below a Brute, depriving him of that true Happineſs, which he has by his Reaſon, and in Deſire, and in View, and which was the Aim of his Creation.

This the *Chriſtian Religion* does; it anſwers the Neceſſities of Humane Nature; preſcribes Remedies for its Misfortunes, and Frailties; propoſes in its Obſervation a Happineſs here, and hereafter. *Here*; for if we take a view of, and conſider all the Evils of this Life, nicely examin into every Particular, we ſhall find, that a through, and univerſal Obſervation of the Doctrines of the Goſpel, will entirely remove them, which is an evident Proof, that it came from God, ſince it teaches Mankind a certain infallible way to that End, for which God made us, *Happineſs*. And ſince the benefit of the Obſervation of the Laws of this Religion reaches only our ſelves, we have no Reaſon or juſt cauſe of Complaint of our Condemnation, for our Breach of them *hereafter*: we have the Promiſes of the Giver of this Law, of eternal Happineſs for a true Obſervation of it.

The Precepts are plain, and founded on Juſtice and Reaſon, on the Nature of God, and the Nature of Man: and they relate either to this World or the next. What relates to this World is our Duty to God, to our Neighbour, and to

our ſelves; what relates to the next World is, the ſure and certain Reward, or Puniſhment of our Good or Evil Obſervation of them. The firſt is compriz'd in *loving God above all things, and our Neighbour, as our ſelves*, which laſt is explain'd farther by another Precept *of doing as we would be done by*, which being ſo eaſie, and ready a Rule of Juſtice, that every Man has it always ready about him, nay, he is always capable of underſtanding it, he can plead no Ignorance of it, if he tranſgreſs it: for every Man, on any Action whatever, can eaſily ask himſelf, what he would have another do to him in the ſame Circumſtances, and that he ſhould do to another. Thus the whole Chriſtian Duty of Action being ſo very plain and eaſie, the Man that forſakes it has no Plea againſt Puniſhment, for breaking that Bond of Juſtice, which ought to be the ſecurity, as it is the Happineſs of Humane Society.

Hence follows the other Part of the *Chriſtian* Religion which relates to the next World, and that is Rewards and Puniſhments. The Rewards we are aſſur'd of for the Obſervation of the Goſpel, that is for ſtudying our own Happineſs, are inconceivable; to which to be ſure the Puniſhments for our Neglect of it muſt bear a Proportion.

The Greatneſs, indeed, of the Goſpel Rewards is ſo very conſiderable, that one wou'd imagine the Means of attaining them ſhou'd be full of Pain and Difficulty, ſomething very hard, and almoſt impoſſible to be performed, full of Fatigue and Labour, when, indeed, all that is required by the infinite Goodneſs of God, is only that we wou'd conſult our own Peace, Tranquillity and Happineſs, and as he has lov'd us, ſo that we ſhould

love him; that we wou'd take such Measures in our Conduct by the Love of one another for his sake and Love, and to secure our Lives from Misfortunes, Distempers, or whatever might destroy, or weaken its Felicity; and further, to believe those Truths which his infinite Goodness and Truth thinks fit to reveal to us, to have such an Idea of God, as God himself, who only knows himself offers to our Belief; and for all this God promises to Translate us by Death from a bounded Happiness here, to one without Bounds hereafter.

Wou'd not it seem strange Madness in any one, to refuse so fair an Offer, whereby only himself is the Gainer? Is there any Man, that wou'd not be Happy? He only can think the Terms difficult. Is there any Man, that wou'd not be secure from all the Blows of Fortune, all the Assaults of Diseases? He only can reject the Conditions of arriving at a Place where God has prepar'd what has not enter'd into the Heart of Man to imagine. For all that Man can propose to his Desires, is narrow and bounded, is finite, that is, proportion'd to himself, but God who is Infinite, has prepar'd for us infinite Rewards.

Thus as Rewards are promis'd to our Observation of these two fundamental Precepts of *Loving God above all things, and our Neighbour as our selves*, so is there threatned as severe Punishments for our Breach of them, hence it follows, that this Punishment is as sure on one hand, as the Rewards are on the other. Nay we cannot suppose the Breach of them unpunish'd, at least unpunishable, without destroying the Justice of God, unless his Mercy intervene, which always supposes a hearty and true Repentance, which cannot possibly be without

Reſtitution, where there is Injuſtice and Injury in the Offence; and the greateſt Man for Worldly Power, Wealth, and the like, muſt own himſelf a Fool to contend it, ſince the Exiſtence of God we have ſeen is ſelf evident, and his Will is ſo too; ſo that to ſuppoſe he can contradict his own Nature, and not puniſh thoſe that tranſgreſs his known and declar'd Will, and Affront it, is the higheſt of Folly; and to pretend to Repentance without Reſtitution, when there is an Ability of Reſtoring, is contrary to common Senſe, and the very Nature of the thing; for how can that be a true Repentance, which leaves you in Poſſeſſion of the Injuſtice: So that the compounding Oppreſſion, Extortion, Uſury, and the like with Heav'n, by building Hoſpitals, *&c.* is to banter our ſelves out of Salvation, with a fooliſh Hypocriſie, which only heightens the Guilt.

This being therefore a ſhort View of the *Chriſtian* Religion, which anſwers all the Ends of Religion, and entirely fulfills the Deſires and Neceſſities of Man, to a diſ-intereſs'd Mind it muſt prove it ſelf. But ſince there are Men who will not be ſatisfy'd with that, I will add ſome others which have been urg'd, but never anſwer'd. Firſt, that of the Author of a *Short Method with the* Deiſts.

It is plain from the New and Old Teſtament, that the whole ſtreſs of the Difficulty depends on the Relation's being Matter of Fact, which being granted, none but a Mad man wou'd refuſe his Belief of the Doctrine ſo recommended by Miracles, and ſo Juſtify'd by Reaſon. He therefore lays down four Rules, to know unqueſtionable Matter of Fact by, which meeting in any Particular cannot be falſe.

1. *That the Matter of Fact be such, that Mens Senses may be judges of it; that is, that it may either be seen, heard, &c. according to the Nature and Circumstance of the Object.* 2. *That it be done publickly, and in the Face of the World.* 3. *That not only publick Monuments be kept up in Memory of it, but some outward Actions to be perform'd.* 4. *That such Monuments and such Actions or Observances be Instituted, and do commence from the Time when the Matter of Fact was done.*

If you take all the Matter of Fact which relates to Faith and Religion in the whole Scripture, you'll find it answer these Marks, but these Marks will meet only in that Matter of Fact which is true: *Ergo.* Tho' some may meet in some, yet all can never meet but in a true Matter of Fact, nay, Invention cannot contrive any. Thus the Passover of the *Jews* was Instituted by *Moses* in Commemoration of the Death of the First Born of *Egypt*, and the same Day all the First born of *Israel* were by a perpetual Law dedicated to God. Such Solemn Customs that spread throughout the whole People, and made a part of their Religion, were too publick, too notorious to be impos'd on the People in general, as Institutions on Account of such a Matter of Fact, which they all saw, unless that Matter of Fact were real and visible in their first Institution.

Thus the Institution of the Priesthood of *Levi*, and of *Christ*, of the *Sabbath*, and the Sunday in Memory of the Resurrection, which being the Confirmation and Foundation of all the Gospel, was from the very time transmitted by the change of the *Sabbath* to all Posterity. The *Passover*, and *Easter*, the *Circumcision*

ession and *Baptism*, the Lords's Supper and the like, are related in the Scripture, as descending all the way down from their Institution, without any Interruption, and which cou'd have had no beginning but from the matters of Fact themselves.

But this Argument is so admirably handled by the Author, that I refer you to him in his little, but valuable Book before mention'd call'd, *a short Method with a Deist*. Join this Argument throughly weigh'd with what *Christophil* has said, and they amount to an Impossibility of Falshood, and a Demonstration, which requires no long time, no Books but the Scripture, nor any Learning, or Skill in Tongues, Fathers, and the numerous Volumes, which have been Justly quoted by Learned Men on this Account: and he that will not hear Reason, let him not pretend to be a Man. And he that prefers the following doubtful Suppositions, and Physical Deductions, obscure and unconcluding, may boast among the Ignorant the name of a Philosopher, but must be look'd on by Men of Understanding as a Fool, when at the same time he refuses to submit to a rational Conviction.

Thus I hope *Philalethes* (pursud *Christophil*) that we have satisfi'd you in the Verity of the Christian Religion in general, that is as to its Moral and unconroverted Part, that is, in *the Love of God, and of our Neighbour*. It remains therefore to consider the other, which is *Faith*, as in St. *John's Gospel*, cap. 17. *This is Life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*; That he is the true *Messias*, the Son of God, as in *Peter's* Confession, and St. *Paul's* Epistles; and all those other points,

which

which are plainly propos'd, and evidently contain'd in the holy Scriptures, without any Human and partial Mixtures, all holy Mysteries of God, reveal'd by our Saviour and his Apoſtles.

A juſt and a through Conſideration of which wou'd take up much more Time, and Words, than I have ſpent in bringing you thus far, they having been the Subject of thouſands of Volumes, and the Hereditary Diſpute of 1700 years. I ſhall therefore defer what I have to ſay on theſe Particulars till we meet again. I ſhall only in the mean while tell you plainly, that no Man is oblig'd to believe any thing, but what is viſibly and clearly contain'd in the holy Bible; for that is the Proteſtant and Catholick Rule of *Faith*, as well as of Works; And whatever Myſteries you find, on an Aſſiduous, diligent, juſt, impartial, and humble Peruſal of it, you have equal Reaſon to believe, with what I have prov'd, becauſe they are built on the ſame Miracles, and the ſame eternal Truth, which cannot deceive nor be deceiv'd, and are not propoſs'd to our Belief, as meer uſeleſs Sepeculations, but as exerciſing our Faith; to fix us on the Contemplation of God, and his great Works, and the Goodneſs, and Mercy of his Nature, and to draw our Attention ſo far to his Commands, that we forget not him, as our Fore fathers did, becauſe they had not continually thoſe Memento's of the Deity deliver'd to them by his Authority, in ſo plain and evident a Manner, as to give them an immediate View of his *Will* without *Reaſoning*; which being by Time and prevailing Paſſions confounded, loſt its way to God in the Darkneſs, and Labyrinths of a miſtaken Self-Love,

ſprung

ſprung from the Prevalence of meer Corporeal Impreſſions, which gave them no Thoughts but for this Life, and thoſe not extended to all, but purely confin'd to themſelves.

Read therefore the Scriptures frequently, as the Noble *Bereans* did, and you will find no Difficulty in this Matter, all Truths neceſſary to Salvation, being here evidently contain'd; nor can you doubt what you find plainly there contain'd, becauſe it is confirm'd by Miracles, which were true, and from God, as has been prov'd. The Exiſtence of God and his Attributes, as I have ſufficiently explain'd them, is the ſureſt Rule of interpreting the Scriptures; for whatever you find Contradictory to theſe Fundamentals of All Religion, muſt be a wrong Interpretation, and you muſt give it one more adequate to Truth, that is more agreeable to God, and his Word.

I ſhall willingly (reply'd *Philalethes*) wait for the Deciſion of Controverſies from you, who have remov'd ſo many doubts already, and given me the Fundamentals of Truth and Religion ſatisfying my ſelf, however in the mean time, with the Rule you have given me of finding out all, that is neceſſary to Salvation; Ev'n the *Scriptures, and the Perfect Knowledge of God, and his Attributes.* Since this Rule will likewiſe decide, or deſcribe the true Church, both in its Authority and Doctrines, I ſhall make it my ſtudy till I ſee you again, and then if any Doubts remain, I ſhall freely impart them and deſire your Aſſiſtance. I ſhall always remember you in my Prayers, ſince to you I owe the Knowledge and Conſideration, that alone can make me Happy, or give me any Satisfaction. If *Pleonexus* be but as ſenſi-

ble

ble of his Error, as I am of mine, the Pains you have been at, will be a sufficient Reward to so good a Man.

As for me (said *Pleonexus*) I confess I had no Doubts before, but what yet remain; while Christians are Bondying against one another, Persecuting, and Murthering each other, Abusing, Defaming, and Cursing their Opposites, I must still be confounded in the Matter.

It is too sad a Truth (reply'd *Christophil*) that the Divisions of Opinions, by the Heat and Passions of the Professors of each, has given Scandal to many; but the Neglect of other Men, will never justifie yours; and the ill Practice of a few in Points of Controversie, will be but a lame Excuse, for your neglecting what no Body disputes, *The Love of God, and of your Neighbour*.

Well, well (reply'd *Pleonexus*) I will consider what you say; but if we stay longer here, it will be dark, and then we may come to damage of either Purse or Body, both which prudent Men shou'd take care of.

They took leave of good *Christopborus*, and return'd safe to the House of *Christophil*, whence *Pleonexus* departed the next Day, on pretended earnest Business, least he shou'd be oblig'd to repeat a Conversation so little agreeable to him. And *Christophil* having no other Affair to detain him there any longer, return'd with them both to *London*, where we will leave them till our next Part.

Uno, Vero, Bono Laus Æterna.

FINIS.

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SIR, I have Read over your Papers with great Satisfaction: And I heartily bless God, with you, and for you. That he has had Mercy upon you, and open'd your Eyes, to see the Wondrous things of his Law, to Convince you of those Ir-refragable Proofes, He has afforded for the Truth, and Authority of the *Holy Scriptures*. Such as no other *Writing* upon Earth can pretend to. And which are Incompatible with any *Forgery* or *Deceit*. He has given you likewise that True *Spirit* of *Repentance*, to bring forth the Fruits thereof; that is to make what *Satisfaction* you can for the Injuries you have done to *Religion*, by Answering what has been Publish'd formerly by your self against it, and being *Converted*, you endeavour to *Strengthen* your *Brethren*.

I. *Creation.*

You have laid the true Foundation of the Being of *God*, against the *Atheist*. Of his *Creation* of the *World*, and *Providence*, against the Asserters of Blind *Chance*. If all be *Chance*, then their *Thoughts* are so too, and there is no *Reasoning or Argument* in the World.

Others, because they know not what to say, Suppose the World, and all Things in it to have been from *Eternity*, and to have gone on, as now, in a Constant *Succession* of *Men* begetting *Men*, *Trees* Springing from *Trees* &c. without any *Beginning*.

But if it was Always as it is Now, then every thing had a *Beginning*. Every *Man*, *Bird*, *Beast*,

Tree

Tree &c. And what has a *Beginning*, cannot be without a *Beginning*.

Therefore, as it is Evident, That Nothing can Make it self: it is equally Evident, that a *Succession* of things *Made*, must have a *Beginning*. A *Succession* of *Beginnings* cannot be without a *Beginning*; For that would be Literally a *Beginning* without a *Beginning*, which is a *Contradiction* in *Terms*.

II. *Providence.*

And to deny *Providence* in the *first Cause*, is the Denying of a God. Whence had we our *Providence*? For we find we have a *Providence* to *Forecast* and *Contrive* how to *Preserve* and *Govern* that which we *Make*, or *Acquire*. Therefore there must be a *Providence*, much more *Eminently* in *God*, to *Preserve* and *Govern* all the *Works* which He has *Made*. He that made the *Eye*, does he not *See*? And He who put *Providence* into the Heart of *Man*, has He None Himself?

And the Glory of his *Wisdom* and *Power* seems Greater to Us, in the *Acts* of His *Providence*, than even in those of *Creation*. Especially in His *Governing* the *Actions* of *Free-Agents*, without taking from them the *Freedom* of their *Will*, to *Do* as they *List*. And turning their very *Evil* into *Good*, by the *Almightiness* of His *Wisdom*. We see great *Part* of this Every *Day*, before our Eyes, in His turning the *Counsels* of the *Wise* into *Foolishness*, and Trapping the *Wicked* in the Works of *their own* Hands. This strikes Us more Sensibly, and is Nearer to

Us

Us, than the Making of a *Tree* or a *Star*. And we *Feel* that over-Ruling *Power* in His *Providence*, which we *Contemplate* in His *Creation*.

When the *Sins* of *Men* are Encreas'd, to Provoke *God* to take *Vengeance*, He permits the *Spirit* of *Fury*, to Incline their *Wills* to *War* and Deſtruction of Each other, *and Nation riſes up againſt Nation*. And when in his *Mercy* He thinks the *Puniſhment* is ſufficient, He *Calms* their Rage, like the *Roaring* of the *Sea*, and ther is *Peace*. And they are ſo *Free Agents* in all this, That they think it is all their own Doing. And ſo Really it is, tho' Under the Un-ſeen *Direction* of a Superior *Power*.

But not only in the *Publick* Tranſactions of the World, His *Providence* is Obſervable. There is no Man, who has taken notice of his own Life, but muſt find it as to his very *Privat* Affairs, A *Thought* ſometimes *Darting* into his *Mind*, to Rid him out of a *Difficulty*, or ſhew him an *Advantage*, which he cou'd not find in much *Conſidering* before. At other times, a Man's *Mind* is ſo *Clouded*, as if his *Eyes* were ſhut, that he cannot *See* his *Way*. Again, ſeveral *Events* which he thought moſt *Funeſt*, and his utter *Ruin*, he finds afterwards to be much for the *Beſt*, and

that he had been *Undone*, if that had not happen'd which he *Fear'd*. On the other hand, many things which he thought for his great *Benefit*, he has found to be for his *Hurt*. This ſhews a *Providence*, which *Sees* further than we can, and Diſpoſes all our *Actions*, tho' done in the full *Freedom* of our own *Will*, to what *Events*, either *Good* or *Bad* for Us, as He pleaſes.

III. *Revelation.*

But theſe Conſiderations from the *Creation* and *Providence*, tho' *Admirable* and *Glorious*, are within the *Oracles* of *Reaſon*; and are but *Earthly Things*, in Compariſon of thoſe *Heavenly Things*, which *God* has *Reveal'd* to Man, at *Sundry-times*, and in *Divers Manners*, and are *Recorded* in the *Holy Scriptures*; and which otherwiſe it was impoſſible for *Man* to have known: *For what man is he that can know the Council of God? Or who can think what the Will of the Lord is? For the Thoughts of mortal men are miſerable, and our Devices are but uncertain: for the Corruptible Body preſſeth down the Soul, and the Earthly Tabernacle weigheth down the Mind that muſeth upon many things; and hardly do we gueſs aright at things that are upon Earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before Us: But the Things that are in Heaven, who hath ſearched out?* Wiſd IX. 13 14, 15 16.

This

This then muſt be purely the Subject of *Revelation*; but when the *Deiſt* is come thus far, he is enter'd into a wide Field: For all Religions, *Jewiſh*, *Heathen*, *Chriſtian*, and *Mahometan*, pretend to *Revelation* for their *Original*.

To clear this Point was the Deſign of the *Short Method with the Deiſts*, which gave the firſt Opportunity to our Converſation.

The *Heathen* and *Mahometan* Religions, not only want thoſe *Marks* (there ſet down) which *Aſcertain* the Truth of *Fact*; But their *Morals* and *Worſhip* are Impure, and Inconſiſtent with the *Attributes* of *God*; as the Indulgence of *Fornication*, and *Uncleanneſs* among the *Heathen*, and their *Humane-Sacrifices* (moſt Abhorent to the *God* of *Holineſs* and *Mercy*) and the filthy *Obſcenity* of their very *Sacra*; beſides the great defect of their *Morals*, which knew no ſuch thing as *Humility*, *Forgiveneſs* of *Injuries*, *Loving* their *Enemies*, and Returning *Good* for *Evil*: Some of their *Philoſophers* ſpoke againſt *Revenging* of *Injuries*, as bringing greater *Injury* to our ſelves, or not worth the while; but not upon the account of *Humanity* and *Love* to our *Brethren*, and doing them *Good*, tho' they did *Evil* to Us; and by the word *Humilitas*, they meant only a *Lowneſs* and *Dejection* of *Mind*, which is a *Vice*; but they had no

Notion of it as a *Vertue*, in having a *Low* Opinion of *one's self*, and in *Honour* Preferring others before us. This they thought a *Vice*, and *Abjection* of *Spirit*. You may see *Pride* and *Self-conceit* run through all their *Philosophy*: Besides their *Principle* of Encreasing their *Empire*, by *Conquering* other *Countries*, who did them no Harm, whom they call'd *Barbarians*.

Into this Class comes likewise the *Sensual* PARADICE propos'd by *Mahomet*, and his *Principle* of Propogating his *Religion* by the *Sword*.

The *Jewish* Religion has all the *Certainty* of *Fact*, and its *Morals* are *Good*. But, because of the *Hardness* of their *Hearts*, they came not up to the Primitive *Purity*: as in case of *Polygamy* and *Divorce*, wherein our *Blessed Saviour* reduces them to the *Original*, That from the *Beginning* it was not so. And in several other Cases, mention'd in His *Sermon* upon the *Mount*.

Therefore the Perfection of *Morals*, and of the true *Knowledge* of *God*, was reserv'd for the *Christian* Religion, which has, in more Abundant manner than even the *Jewish*, the infallible *Marks* of the *Truth* of the *Facts*, in the *Multitude* and *Notoriety* of the *Miracles* wrought by our *Blessed Saviour*, beyond those of *Moses*. Which fully

fully answers the Objection of the *Jews*, that *Christ* wrought his *Miracles* by *Beelzebub*: For then, as he said to them, *By whom do your Children cast out Devils*? Was it by the *Spirit* of *God*, or *Beelzebub*, that *Moses* and the *Prophets* wrought their *Miracles*?

Then from the *Purity* and *Heavenliness* of His *Doctrine*, all Levell'd to destroy the *Kingdom* of *Satan*, those wicked PRINCIPLES, and *Idolatrous* WORSHIP which he had set up in the World; the other *Answer* of our *Blessed Saviour* concludes *Demonstratively*, of a *Kingdom divided against it self*, That if *Satan* cast out *Satan*, to promote that *Doctrine* which *Christ* taught, we must alter our Notion of the *Devil*, and suppose him to be *Good*; and his *Kingdom* must then be at an End; which we see not yet done, for *Wickedness* still *Reigns* in the *World*.

IV. Object. *As to the Holy Trinity.*

Against these things *Reason* has nothing to Object; but then *Prejudices* are rais'd up against what is *Reveal'd*, as being of things that are above our *Reason*, and out of its Reach; as chiefly the Doctrine of the Blessed *Trinity*.

In Answer to which, we may consider, that if such things were not Above our *Reason*,

Reaſon, there needed no *Revelation* of them. But only a bare *Propoſal* of them to our *Reaſon*, made by any Body, without any *Authority*; and their own *Evidence* wou'd carry them through.

In the next place, we muſt acknowledge that ther are many things in the *Divine* Nature far out of the Reach of our *Reaſon*. That it muſt be ſo; For how can *Finite* comprehend *Infinte*? VVho can *think* what *Eternity* is? A *Duration* without *Beginning*, or *Succeſſion* of *Parts* or *Time*! Who can ſo much as *Imagine* or Frame any *Idea* of a *Being* neither made by it ſelf, nor by any other! of *Omnipreſence*! of a Boundleſs *Immenſity*, &c.

Yet all this *Reaſon* obliges us to Allow, as the Neceſſary Conſequences of a *Firſt Cauſe*.

And where any thing is Eſtabliſh'd upon the full Proof of *Reaſon*, there 10000 *Objections* or *Difficulties*, tho' we cannot *Anſwer* them, are of no Force at all to overthrow it. Nothing can do that, but to Refute thoſe *Reaſons* upon which it is *Eſtabliſh'd*; till when, the *Truth* and *Certainty* of the *Thing* remains *Unſhaken*, tho' we cannot *Explain* it, nor *ſolve* the *Difficulties* that ariſe from it.

And if it is ſo, upon the Point of *Reaſon*, much more upon that of *Revelation*, where the Subject *matter* is *Above* our *Reaſon*, and cou'd

cou'd never have been found out by it.

All to be done in that Caſe, is, to ſatisfie our ſelves of the *Truth* of the *Fact*, that ſuch things were *Reveal'd* of *God*, and are no *Impoſture*. This is done, as to the Holy *Scriptures*, by the *four Marks* beforemention'd.

And as to the *Contradiction* alledged in *Three* being *One*, it is no *Contradiction*, unleſs it be ſaid, that *Three* are *One*, in the ſelf ſame *Reſpect*: For in divers *Reſpects*, ther is no ſort of Difficulty, that *One* may be *Three*, or *Three Thouſand*; as *One Army* may conſiſt of many *Thouſands*, and yet it is but *One Army*: There is but *One* Humane *Nature*, and yet ther are *Multitudes* of *Perſons* who partake of that *Nature*.

Now it is not ſaid, that the three *Perſons* in the *Divine Nature*, are one *Perſon*; that wou'd be a *Contradiction*: But it is ſaid, that the three *Perſons* are one *Nature*. They are not *Three* and *One*, in the ſame *Reſpect*; they are *Three* as to *Perſons*, and *One* as to *Nature*. Here is no *Contradiction*.

Again, that may be a *Contradiction* in one *Nature*, which is not ſo in another: for Example, it is a *Contradiction*, that a

Man can go 2 *Yards* or *Miles*, as ſoon as *One*, becauſe *Two* is but *One*, and another *One*: Yet this is no *Contradiction* to *Sight*, which can reach a *Star* as ſoon as the top of the *Chimney*, and the *Sun* darts his *Rayes* in one *Inſtant* from *Heaven* to *Earth*: But more than all theſe is the motion of *Thought*, to which no *Diſtance* of *Place* is any Interruption, which can arrive at *Japan* as ſoon as at a *Yard's* diſtance; and can run into the *Immenſity* of *Poſſibilities*.

Now there are no *Words* poſſible, whereby to give any *Notion* or *Idea* of *Sight* or *Light* to a Man born *Blind*: And Conſequently to Reconcile the Progreſs of *Sight* or *Light* to him from being an abſolute *Contradiction*; becauſe he can meaſure it no otherwiſe than according to the *Motion* of *Legs* or *Arms*, for he knows none other: Therefore we cannot Charge that as a *Contradiction* in one *Nature*, which is ſo in another, unleſs we underſtand both *Natures* perfectly well: And therefore we cannot charge that as a *Contradiction* in the *Incomprehenſible* Nature of being *Three* and one, tho' we found it to be ſo in our *Nature*; which we do not, becauſe, as before ſaid, they are not *Three* and *One* in the ſame *Reſpect*.

Now let us conſider further, that tho' ther is no *Compariſon* betwixt *Finite* and

In-

In-Finite, yet we have nearer *Reſemblances* of the *Three* and *One* in *God*, than ther is of *Sight* to a Man Born *Blind*: For ther is nothing in any of the other four *Senſes* that has any *Reſemblance* at all to that of *Seeing*, or that can give ſuch a Man any *Notion* whatever of it.

But we find in our own *Nature*, which is ſaid to be made after the *Image* of *God*, a very near *Reſemblance* of *His* Holy *Trinity*, and of the different *Operations* of each of the *Divine Perſons*.

For example, to *Know* a thing *Preſent*, and to *Remember* what is *Paſt*, and to *Love* or *Hate*, are different *Operations* of our *Mind*, and perform'd by different *Faculties* of it. Of theſe the *Underſtanding* is the *Father* Faculty, and gives *Being* to things, as to Us; for what we *Know* not, is to Us as if it *were* not. This Anſwers to *Creation*. From this *Faculty* proceeds the *Second*, that of *Memory*, which is a *Preſerving* of what the *Underſtanding* has *Created* to Us. Then the *Third* Faculty that of the *Will*, which *Loves* or *Hates*, proceeds from *Both* the *Other*, for we cannot *Love* or *Hate* what is not firſt *Created* by the *Underſtanding*, and *Preſerv'd* to Us by the *Memory*.

And tho' theſe are different *Faculties*, and their *Operations* Different; that the

Second

Second Proceeds from the *First*, or is *Begotten* by it; and the *Third* Proceeds from the *First* and *Second* in Conjunction, ſo that one is *Before* the other, in Order of *Nature*, yet not in *Time*; for they are all *Con-genial*, and one is as ſoon in the *Soul* as the other; and yet they make not *Three Souls*, but *One Soul*: And tho' their *Operations* are *Different*, and the one *Proceeds* from the other, yet no *One* can *Act* without the *Other*, and they all *Concur* to every *Act* of *Each*; for in *Underſtanding* and *Remembring* there is a Concurrent *Act* of the *Will*, to *Conſent* to ſuch *Underſtanding*, or *Remembering*; ſo that no *One* can *Act* without the *Other*; in which Senſe, none is *Before* or *After* the other, nor can any of them *Be* or *Exiſt* without the other.

But what we call *Faculties* in the *Soul*, we call *Perſons* in the *Godhead*: Becauſe ther are *Perſonal* Actions attributed to *Each* of them. As that of *Sending*, and being *Sent*, to take *Fleſh*, and be *Born*, &c.

And we have no other *Word*, whereby to Expreſs it. We ſpeak it after the Manner of Men; nor cou'd we Underſtand, if we heard any of thoſe *Un-ſpeakable words*, which Expreſs the *Divine Nature* in its proper *Eſſence*; therefore we muſt make

Allow-

Allowances, and *Great* ones, when we apply *VVords* of our *Nature*, to the *Infinite* and *Eternal Being*. We muſt not Argue *Strictly* and *Philoſophically* from them, more than from *God*'s being ſaid to *Repent*, to be *Angry*, &c. They are Words, *ad Captum*, in Condeſcenſion to our weak *Capacities*; and without which, we cou'd not Underſtand.

But this, I ſay, That there are nearer *Reſemblances* afforded to Us, of this Ineffable *Myſtery* of the Holy *Trinity*, than ther is betwixt one of our outward *Senſes* and another; than ther is to a *Blind Man* of *Colours*, or of the *Motion of Light* or *Sight*: And a *Contradiction* in the one, will not Infer a *Contradiction* in the other; tho' it is impoſſible to be Solv'd, as in the Inſtance before given of a Man Born *Blind*, till we come to *Know* both *Natures* Diſtinctly.

And if we had not the *Experience* of the Different *Faculties* of our *Mind*, the *Contradiction* wou'd Appear *Ir-Reconcilable* to all our *Philoſophy*, how *Three* cou'd be *One*, each *Diſtinct* from the other, yet but one *Soul*: One *Proceeding* from, or being *Begot* by the Other; and yet all *Co-Eval*, and none *Before* or *After* the other: And as to the Difference betwixt *Faculties* and *Perſons*,

ſons, *Subſtance* and *Subſiſtence*, it is a *Puzling* piece of *Philoſophy*: And tho' we give not a Diſtinct *Subſiſtence* to a *Faculty*, it has an *Exiſtence*, and one *Faculty* can no more be Another, than one *Perſon* can be Another. So that the Caſe ſeems to be alike in Both, as to what concerns our preſent Difficulty of *Three* and *One*: beſides what before is ſaid, That by the Word *Perſon*, when apply'd to *God*, (for want of a *Proper* VVord, whereby to Expreſs it) we muſt mean ſomething Infinitely different from *Perſonality* among *Men*. And therefore from a *Contradiction* in the one (Suppoſe it granted) we cannot Charge a *Contradiction* in the other, unleſs we *Underſtand* it as well as the other: for how elſe can we draw the *Parallel*?

VVhat a *Vain* thing is our *Philoſophy*, when we wou'd *Meaſure* the *Incomprehenſible Nature* by it! when we find it *Nonpluſt* in our own *Nature*, and that in many Inſtances. If I am *All* in one *Room*, is it not a *Contradiction* that any *Part* of *Me* ſhou'd be in another *Room*? yet it was a common ſaying among *Philoſophers*, that the *Soul* is *All* in *All*, and *All* in every *Part* of the *Body*: How is the ſame Individual *Soul* Preſent, at one and the ſame *Time*, to *Actuate* the Diſtant *Members* of the *Body*, with-

without either *Multiplication* or *Diviſion* of the *Soul*? Is ther any thing in *Body* can bear any *Reſemblance* to this, without a manifeſt *Contradiction*? Nay, even as to *Bodies*, is any thing more a Self-Evident *Principle*, than that the *Cauſe* muſt be before the *Effect*? Yet the *Light* and *Heat* of the *Sun* are as *Old* as the *Sun*: and ſuppoſing the *Sun* to be *Eternal*, they wou'd be as *Eternal*.

And as *Light* and *Heat* are of the *Nature* of the *Sun*, and as the *Three Faculties* before mentioned are of the *Nature* of the *Soul*, ſo that the *Soul* cou'd not be a *Soul* if it wanted any of them; ſo may we, from *ſmall* things to *Great*, Apprehend without any *Contradiction*, that the *Three Perſons* are of the very *Nature* and *Eſſence* of the *Deity*; and ſo of the ſame *Subſtance* with it; and tho' one *Proceeding* from the other, (as the *Faculties* of the *Soul* do) yet that all *Three* are *Conſubſtantial*, *Co-Eternal*, and of *Neceſſary* Exiſtence as *God* is; For that theſe *Three* are *God*; and *God* is theſe *Three*. As *Underſtanding*, *Memory*, and *Will* are a *Soul*; and a *Soul* is *Underſtanding*, *Memory*, and *Will*.

I intend (God wiling) to Treat of this Subject more Largely by it ſelf. But I have ſaid thus much here, to Clear the

the way from that *Objection* of Rejecting *Revelation*, (tho' we are *Infallibly* ſure of the *Fact*) becauſe of the ſuppos'd *Contradiction* to our *Reaſon*, in comparing it with our *Earthly* Things.

V. *Of the Differences among* Chriſtians.

But now that, from all the Proofs of the *Certainty* of the *Revelation*, we are come to Fix in *Chriſtianity*, our Labour is not yet at an End: For Here you ſee Multiplicity of *Sects* and *Diviſions*, which our *Bleſſed Saviour* foretold ſhou'd come, for the Probation of the *Elect*. As ſome *Canaanites* were left in the Land, to teach the *Iſraelites* the uſe of *War*, leſt by too Profound a *Peace* they might grow *Lazy* and *Stupid*, and become an eaſie *Prey* to their *Enemies*. So might *Chriſtianity* be loſt among Us, if we had nothing to do, it wou'd *Dwindle* and *Decay*, and *Corrupt* by Degrees, as *Water* Stagnates by ſtanding ſtill: But when we are put to *Contend Earneſtly for the Faith*, it Quickens our *Zeal*, keeps Us upon our *Guard*, Trims our *Lamp*, and *Fourbiſhes* the *Sword* of the *Spirit*, which might otherwiſe *Ruſt* in its *Scabbard*. And it gives great Opportunity to ſhew Us the Wonder-

ful

ful *Providence* and *Protection* of GOD over his *Church*, in *Preſerving* Her againſt a *viſibly* unequal *Force*. And in this *Conteſt*, to ſome this High *Privilege* is *Granted, in the behalf of Chriſt, not only to believe on Him, but alſo to Suffer for His Sake.* Phil. 1. 29. Theſe go to make up the *Noble Army* of *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors*, for ever *Triumphant* in *Heaven*. Others *Conquer* even here on *Earth*, that *God's Wonderful* Doings may be known to the *Children* of *Men*.

But as he who Builds a *Tower* ought firſt to compute the *Expence*, and he who goes to *War*, to conſider his *Strength*: So our *Bleſſed Saviour* has Inſtructed Us, That he who will be his *Diſciple*, muſt reſolve beforehand to take up his *Croſs* Daily, *to forſake Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Lands, and Life it ſelf*, when he cannot keep them with the *Truth* and *Sincerity* of the *Goſpel*. Therefore we muſt put on *the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to ſtand in the Evil Day, and having overcome all, to ſtand: For we wreſtle not againſt Fleſh and Blood, but againſt Principalities, againſt Powers, againſt the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, againſt Wicked Spirits in High Places.*

And

And what is it we *Wreſtle* for? For the *Great Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſt in the Fleſh*, &c.

VI. *The Doctrine of* Satisfaction.

Here is the *Foundation* of the *Chriſtian* Religion; That when *Man* had *Sinned*, and was utterly unable to make any *Satisfaction* for his *Sin*, *God* ſent His own *Son* to take upon Him our *Fleſh*, and, in the ſame *Nature* that *Offended*, to make full *Satisfaction* for the *Sins* of the whole World, by *His* Perfect *Obedience*, and the *Sacrifice* of *Himſelf* upon the Croſs.

Some ſay, what need any *Satisfaction*? Might not *God* Forgive without it? It wou'd ſhew greater *Mercy*. But theſe Men Conſider not, that *God* is not only *Juſt*, but He is *Juſtice* it ſelf, *Juſtice* in the *Abſtract*, he is *Eſſential Juſtice*. And *Juſtice*, by its *Nature*, muſt exact to the *utmoſt Farthing*; elſe it were not *Juſtice*: To *Remit* is *Mercy*, it is not *Juſtice*: And the *Attributes* of *God*, muſt not *Fight* and *Oppoſe* each other; they muſt all ſtand *Infinite* and *Compleat*. You may ſay then, how can *God* Forgive at all? How can Infinite *Mercy* and *Juſtice* ſtand together?

This

This Queſtion cou'd never have been Anſwer'd, if *God* Himſelf had not ſhew'd it to us, in the Wonderful *Oeconomy* of our *Redemption*: For here is His *Juſtice* ſatisfy'd to the leaſt *Jota*, by the perfect *Obedience* and *Paſſion* of *Chriſt*, (who is *God*) in the ſame *Humane Nature* that *Offended*. Here is Infinite *Wiſdom* expreſs'd in this *Means* found out for our *Salvation*. And Infinite *Mercy* in Affording it to us. Thus all His *Attributes* are *Satisfy'd*, and *Fill'd* up to the *Brim*. They *Contradict* not, but *Exalt* each other. His *Mercy* Exalts and Magnifies His *Juſtice*: His *Juſtice* Exalts his *Mercy*, and both *His* Infinite *Wiſdom*.

Here is a view of *God*, beyond what all the *Oracles* of *Reaſon* cou'd ever have found out, from His *Works* of *Creation*, or Common *Providence*! Theſe ſhew His *Works*, but this His *Nature*, it is *Himſelf!* The very *Face* of *God*! Before which the *Angels* vail their *Faces*, and *Deſire* to *Look* into this *Abyſs* of *Goodneſs*, and *Power*, and *Wiſdom*, which they will never be able to *Fathom*, but ſtill *Feed* upon, and *Search* farther and farther into it, with *Adoration*, to *Eternity!* And they *Worſhip* our *Manhood* thus taken in-

to *God!* And *Rejoyce* to be *Miniſtring Spirits* to Us, while upon *Earth.*

This you and I have talk'd over at Large: And this I gave you as the *Sum* and *Subſtance*, the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the *Chriſtian* Religion. And now I Repeat it as the ſureſt *Criterion* to guid a Man, in the *Difficulty* before Us, that is, in the choice of a *Church*, in the midſt of all that variety there is among *Chriſtians.* Whoever hold not this *Doctrine*, joyn not with them, nor bid them *God Speed.*

VII. The Socinians.

This will ſave you from the *Socinians*, or the *Unitarians*, as they now call themſelves in *England*, who expreſly *Deny* this *Doctrine:* for they Deny the *Doctrine* of the *Holy Trinity*, and the *Divinity* of *Chriſt*, upon which it is founded. They Conſider *Chriſt* no otherwiſe than a meer *Man*; and propoſe Him only as a *Teacher* and Good *Example* to Us. But then they are Confounded, with all their Pretence to *Wit* and *Reaſon*, to give any account for His *Death*, which was not neceſſary to *Teaching*, or being an *Example.* *That*, an *Angel* or a *Prophet* might have been.

Then

Then they ſay, That he *Died*, to Confirm the *Truth* of His *Doctrine*: But ſet this *Doctrine* of *Satisfaction* aſide, and He Taught nothing new except the Improvement of ſome *Morals*: beſides, *Dying* does not *Confirm* the *Truth* of any *Doctrin*. It only ſhews, That He who *Dies* for it, does himſelf *Believe* it. Some have *Dy'd* for *Errors*: And the *Socinian Doctrine* Affords no *Comfort*, no *Aſſurance* to Us. For if we conſider *Chriſt* only as a *Teacher* or *Example*, we have not follow'd His *Precepts* nor *Example*: Here is nothing but matter of *Condemnation* to Us. But if we look upon Him as our *Surety*, who has paid our *Debt* as our *Sacrifice*, *Atonement*, and *Propitiation* for our *Sins*, and that we are *Saved* by His *Blood*, (which is the Language of the Holy *Scriptures*, of which the *Socinians* know no Meaning) this is a *Rock* and Infallible *Aſſurance*.

VIII. The Church of Rome.

As the *Socinians* have totally Rejected this *Doctrine*, ſo the *Church* of *Rome* has greately *Vitiated* and *Depreſs'd* it, by their *Doctrine* of *Merit* and their own *Satisfaction*, which they make Part of their *Sa-*

crament of *Penance*. On this is Founded their *Purgatory*, wherein *Souls* who had not made full *Satisfaction* upon *Earth*, muſt *Compleat* it there. They Deny not the *Satisfaction* of *Chriſt*, but joyn their own with it, as if it were not *Sufficient*.

IX. *The* Diſſenters.

On the other hand our *Diſſenters* run to the contrary *Extream*: And becauſe our *Good Works* muſt have no *Share* in the *Satisfaction* for *Sin*, which they cannot, as being *Unworthy*, and mix'd with our *Infirmities*, and our *Sin*: Therefore they make them not Neceſſary, nor of any Effect towards our *Salvation*. They ſay, that *Chriſt* did not *Die* for any but the *Elect*, in whom he ſees no *Sin*, let them Live never ſo *Wickedly*. They *Damn* the far greateſt Part of the World, by Ir-reverſible *Decrees* of *Reprobation*, and ſay, That their *Good Works* are hateful to *God*; and that it is not Poſſibly in their Power to be *Saved*, let them *Believe* as they will, and *Live* never ſo *Religiouſly*: They take away *Free-Will* in *Man*, and make him a Perfect *Machin*. They make *God* the *Author* of *Sin*, to Create

Men

Men on purpoſe to *Damn* them; and to *Puniſh* them *Eternally* for not Doing what was not in their *Power* to Do, and for Doing what He had made *Impoſſible* for them not to Do. They make his *Promiſes* and *Threatnings* to be of no *Effect*, nay, to be a ſort of *Burleſquing* and *Inſulting* thoſe whom He has made *Miſerable*. Which is an Hideous *Blaſphemy!*

For a Solution in this Matter, both as to *Faith* and *Works*, I Refer you to the *Homilies* of *Faith*, and *Salvation*, and of *Good Works*; where you will find the true *Chriſtian Doctrine* ſet forth *clearly*, and *ſolidly*.

I will not Anticipat what you Deſign for your Second *Part*, by entering into other Diſputes there are among *Chriſtians*, only this will be Exceeding Neceſſary, to ſettle well the Notion of the *Church* of *Chriſt*, to which all do Pretend, in various Manners.

X. *The true Notion of the* Church.

Firſt therefore, the *Church* muſt be conſider'd not only as a *Sect*, that is, a Company of People *Believing* ſuch and ſuch *Tenets*, like the ſeveral *Sects* of the

Heathen

Heathen Philoſophers: But as a *Society* under *Government*, with *Governours* Appointed by *Chriſt*, inveſted with ſuch *Powers* and *Authority*, to *Admit* into, and *Exclude* out of the *Society*, and *Govern* the Affairs of the *Body*.

This *Power* was Delegated by *Chriſt*, to His *Apoſtles*, and their *Succeſſors*, to the end of the World: Accordingly the *Apoſtles* did Ordain *Biſhops* in all the *Churches* which they Planted throughout the whole World, as the Supreme *Governours*, and *Centre* of *Unity*, each in his own *Church*. Theſe were oblig'd to keep *Unity* and *Communion* with one another. Which is therefore call'd *Catholick Communion*. And all theſe *Churches* conſider'd together, is the *Catholick Church*: As the ſeveral *Nations* of the Earth are call'd the *World*.

XI. *Of an* Univerſal Biſhop.

And *Chriſt* Appointed no *Univerſal Biſhop* over His *Church*, more than an *Univerſal Monarch* over the *World*. No ſuch thing was known in the *Primitive Church*, till it was ſet up firſt by *John*, *Biſhop* of *Conſtantinople*, then by the *Biſhop* of *Rome*, in the *Seventh Century*. And as the

the whole *World* is *One Kingdom* to *God*, as it is Written, *His Kingdom Ruleth over All*, ſo the ſeveral *Churches* of the World are *One Church* to *Chriſt*. And the *Church* of *Rome*'s ſaying that She is that *One Church*, or ſhew Us another, which can Diſpute it with Us, in *Univerſality*, *Antiquity*, &c. Is the ſame as if *France* (for example) ſhould ſay, Who can compare with Me? Therefore I am the *Univerſal* or *Monarch*, ſhew me another: The thing Appears *Ridiculous* at the firſt Propoſal. For it muſt be ſaid to *Rome*, or to *France*, That if you were ten times greater than you are, you are yet but a *Part* of the *Whole*. And to ſay, who elſe Pretends to it? Why none. And it wou'd be Non-ſenſe in any who did Pretend to it. One *Part* may be *Bigger* than another: But one *Part* can never be the *Whole*. And all Reſults in this, whether *Chriſt* did appoint an *Univerſal Biſhop* over all the *Churches* in the World? And we are willing to leave the *Iſſue* to that, if it can Appear either from *Scripture* or *Antiquity*. Beſides the *Reaſon* of the thing: For as *Gregory* the *Great* Urg'd againſt *John* of *Conſtantinople*, if there was an *Univerſal Biſhop*, the *Univerſal Church* muſt Fall, if that one *Univerſal*

Biſhop Fell. And ſo all muſt come to *Centre* in *One*, *Poor*, *Fallible*, *Mortal Man*.

This oblig'd the *Pope* to run into another monſtrous *Extream*, and ſet up for *Infallibility* in his own *Perſon*, as the only *Succeſſor* of St. *Peter*, and *Heir* of thoſe *Promiſes* made to Him, *Super hanc Petram*, &c. This was the Current *Doctrine* of the *Divines* in the *Church* of *Rome*, in former Ages, as you may ſee in *BELLARMIN*, *de Rom. Pontif. l. 4. c. 5.* Where he carries this ſo high, as to Aſſert, That if the *Pope* did Command the Practice of *Vice*, and Forbid *Vertue*, the *Church* were Bound to Believe that *Vertue* was *Vice*, and that *Vice* was *Vertue*. And in his *Preface* he calls this Abſolute *Supremacy* of the *Pope*, the *Summa rei Chriſtianæ*, the *Sum* and *Foundation* of the *Chriſtian Religion*. And that to Deny it, was not only a Simple *Error*, but a Pernicious *Hereſie*.

This was *Old Popery*. But now it is generally Decry'd by the *Papiſts* themſelves, yet no *Pope* has been brought to *Renounce* it. They will not Quit *Claim*.

When they departed from the *Infallibility* of the *Pope*, they ſought to place it in their *General Councils*. But theſe

are

are not always in Being; and ſo their *Infallibility* muſt *Drop* for ſeveral *Ages* together: Which will not conſiſt with their *Argument*, That *God* is oblig'd by His *Goodneſs*, to Afford *always* an *outward* and *Living Judge* and *Guide* to His *Church*. Beſides, that Inſtances are found where thoſe *Councils* they call *General* have contradicted one another.

For which Reaſons, others of them place the *Infallibility* in the *Church Diffuſive*: But this upon their *Scheme*, is *Indefinite*, and the *Judge* of *Controverſie* muſt be ſought among numberleſs *Individuals*, of whom no one is the *Judge* or *Guide*.

XII. *Of* Infallibility *in the* Church.

But there is an *Infallibility* in the *Church*, not *Perſonal* in any *One*, or *All* of *Chriſtians* put together; for *Millions* of *Fallibles*, can never make an *Infallible*. But the *Infallibility* conſiſts in the *Nature* of the *Evidence*, which having all the *four Marks* mention'd in *The Short Method with the* Deiſts, cannot poſſibly be *Falſe*. As you and I believe there is ſuch a *Town*

as

as *Constantinople*, that there was such a *Man* as *Henry* VIII. as much as if we had seen them with our Eyes: Not from the Credit of any *Historian* or *Traveller*, all of whom are *Fallible*; but from the *Nature* of the *Evidence*, wherein it is *Impossible* for Men to have *Conspir'd* and carry it on without *Contradiction*, if it were *False*.

Thus whatever *Doctrine* has been Taught in the *Church*, (according to the Rule of *Vincentius Lirinensis*) *Cempers, ubique, & ab omnibus*, is the *Christian Doctrine*; For in this case, such *Doctrine* is a *Fact*, and having the foresaid *Marks*, must be a true *Fact*, viz. That such *Doctrine* was so *Taught* and *Receiv'd*.

This was the Method taken in the *Council* call'd at *Alexandria* against *Arius*, it was ask'd by *Alexander* the *Arch-bishop* who Presided, *Quis unquam talia Audivit?* whoever heard of this *Doctrine* before? And it being Answer'd by all the *Bishops* there Assembled in the *Negative*. It was concluded a *Novel Doctrine*, and contrary to what had been *Universally* Receiv'd in the *Christian Church*. Thus every *Doctrine* may be reduc'd to *Fact*; for it is purely

Socrat Hist. l. 1. c. 5. Gr.

purely *Fact*, whether ſuch *Doctrine* was *Receiv'd*, or not?

And a *Council* Aſſembled upon ſuch an Occaſion, *ſtand* as *Evidences* of the *Fact*, not as *Judges* of the *Faith*; which they cannot *Alter* by their *Votes* or *Authority*.

A *Council* has *Authority* in Matters of *Diſcipline* in the *Church*; but in Matters of *Faith*, what is call'd their *Authority*, is their *Atteſtation* to the *Truth* of *Fact*: which if it has the *Marks* before mentioned, muſt be *Infallibly* True: Not from the *Infallibility* of Any or All of the *Perſons*, but from the Nature of the *Evidence*, as before is ſaid.

And this is the ſureſt Rule, whereby to *Judge* of *Doctrines*, and to know what the *Catholick Church* has *Believ'd* and *Taught*, as *Received* from the *Apoſtles*.

And they who refuſe to be *Try'd* by this *Rule*, who ſay, we care not what was *Believ'd* by the *Catholick Church*, either in former Ages, or now; we think our own *Interpretations* or *Criticiſms* upon ſuch a *Text*, of as great *Authority* as theirs; theſe are juſtly to be *Suſpected*, nay, it is *Evident*, that they are *Broaching* ſome *Novel Doctrines*, which cannot ſtand this *Teſt*. Beſides the monſtrous *Arrogance* in

in such a Pretence; These overthrow the *Foundation* of that *sure* and *Infallible Evidence* upon which *Christianity* it self does stand; And Reduce All to a Blind *Enthusiasm*.

XIII. *Of* Episcopacy.

But further, Sir, in your Search after a *Church*, you must not only consider the *Doctrine* but the *Government*, that is, as I said before, you must consider the *Church* not only as a *Sect*, but as a *Society*: For tho' every *Society* Founded upon the Belief of such *Tenets*, may be call'd a *Sect*, yet every *Sect* is not a *Society*. Now a *Society* cannot be without *Government*, for it is that which makes a *Society*. And a *Government* cannot be without *Governours*. The *Apostles* were Instituted by *Christ*, the first *Governours* of his *Church*, and with them and their *Successors*, He has Promis'd to be to the end of the World. The *Apostles* did Ordain *Bishops* as *Governours*, in all the *Churches* which they Planted throughout the whole World. And these *Bishops* were esteem'd the *Successors* of the *Apostles*, each in his own *Church*, from the Beginning to this Day. This was the Current Notion and Language

guage of Antiquity. *Omnes Apoſtolorum Succeſſores sunt.* That all *Biſhops* were the *Succeſſors* of the *Apoſtles*. As St. *Jerom* ſpeaks, *Epiſt. ad Evagr.* And St. *Ignatius*, who was Conſtituted by the *Apoſtles Biſhop* of *Antioch*, ſalutes the *Church* of the *Trallians*, Ἐν τῷ πληρώματι ἐν Ἀποστολικῷ χαρακτῆρι. *In the Plenitude of the Apoſtolical Character.* Thus it continu'd from the Days of the *Apoſtles*, to thoſe of *John Calvin*. In all the which time there was not any one *Church* in the whole *Chriſtian* World, that was not *Epiſcopal*. But now it is ſaid by our *Diſſenters*, That there is no need of *Succeſſion* from the *Apoſtles* or thoſe *Biſhops* Inſtituted by them. That they can make *Governours* over themſelves whom they liſt. And what ſignifies the *Government* of the *Church*, ſo the *Doctrine* be Pure? But this totally Diſſolves the *Church* as a *Society*. The *Government* of which conſiſts in the *Right* and *Title* of the *Governour*. And as the *Apoſtle* ſays, *No Man taketh this Honour to himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was* Aaron. And the Diſpute betwixt him and *Korah* was not as to any Point either of *Doctrine* or *Worſhip*, but meerly upon that of *Church-Government*. Heb. 5. 4.

And

And St. *Jude*, ver. 11. brings down the ſame Caſe to that of the *Chriſtian* Church. And Reaſon Carrys it as to All *Societies*. They who will not *Obey* the Lawfull *Governour*, but ſet up Another in oppoſition to him, are no longer of the *Society*, but *Enemies* to it; And Juſtly *Forfeit* all the *Rights* and *Privileges* of it.

Now Conſidering that all the *Promiſes* in the *Goſpel* are Made to the *Church*, what a Dreadful thing muſt it be, to be *Excluded* from all theſe!

Beſides, the *Church* is Call'd the *Pillar and Ground of the Truth*. As being a *Society* Inſtituted by *Chriſt*, for the Support and Preſervation of the *Faith*. This no Particular *Church* can Attribute to its ſelf, otherwiſe than as being a *Part* of the *Whole*. And therefore, as St. *Cyprian*, ſays, *Chriſt made the College of Biſhops Numerous, that if one prov'd Heretical, or ſought to Devour the Flock, the Reſt might Interpoſe for the Saving of it.* This is Equally againſt letting the whole Depend upon one *Univerſal Biſhop*: And againſt Throwing off the whole *Epiſcopate*, that is, all the *Biſhops* in the World; which wou'd be a total *Diſſolution* of the *Church* as a *Society*, by leaving no *Governors* in it, or, which is the ſame, Setting up

Governors

Governors of our own Head, without any *Authority* or *Succeſſion* from the *Apoſtles*; which is Rendring the whole *Precarious*, and without any *Foundation*. And it is a Suppoſing that *Providence* is more Oblig'd to Stand by a *Church* ſet up in Direct *Oppoſition* to His *Inſtitution*, than by that *Church* which *Chriſt* Himſelf has *Founded*, and Promis'd to be with it to the *End* of the *World*. And tho' He has Permitted *Errors* and *Hereſies* to over-ſpread Several *Parts* of it, at ſeveral Times, for the Probation of the *Elect*, like the *Waining* of the *Moon*, yet has He not left *Himſelf* without *Witneſs*, and has Reſtor'd *Light* to Her, purſuant to His *Promiſe* that the *Gates* of *Hell* ſhou'd not *Prevail* againſt Her. And this by the Means of His *Servants* and *Subſtitutes* the *Biſhops* of his *Church*, whom He has not Deſerted. All of whom, through the whole World always did, and ſtill do Maintain and own the *Apoſtolick Creed*. And wherein Some, as the *Arians*, have Perverted the Senſe of ſome *Articles*, that Laſted but a ſhort Time; And the *Truth* has been more Confirm'd by it in the Unanimous *Conſent* and *Teſtimony* of the whole *Epiſcopal College*, to the *Primitive Doctrin* which they had Receiv'd from

the

the *Beginning*. God *Heal'd* these *Hereſies* in His own way, by the *Biſhops* and *Governours* of His *Church* whom he had Appointed, and without any *Infraction* upon His own *Inſtitution*.

And it is obſervable, That theſe *Hereſies* began by *Infraction* which Men made upon His *Inſtitution* of *Biſhops*, as *Arius* an Ambitious *Presbyter* firſt Roſe up againſt his *Biſhop*, before he was given up to that vile *Hereſie*, which he vented afterwards, by Degrees, to Gain a Party after him, thereby to Maintain the *Oppoſition* which he had made againſt his *Biſhop*. And, by a Juſt Judgement, he *Fell* from one *Error* to Another, till he at laſt *Compleated* that Deteſtable *Hereſie* which bears his *Name*.

And in all the *Annals* of the *Church*, whether under the *Law* or the *Goſpel*, there is not one *Inſtance* of a *Schiſm* againſt the *Prieſt-hood*, which *God* had Appointed, but Great *Errors* in *Doctrin* and *Worſhip* did follow it. Thus the *Prieſthood* which *Micah* ſet up of his own Head, and that which *Jeroboam* ſet up in Oppoſition to that of *Aaron*, both Ended in *Idolatry*. Thus the *Novatians* and *Donatiſts* who made *Schiſms* againſt their *Biſhops*, fell into Grievous *Errors*, tho' they did not Renounce the *Faith*. And

And into what Groſs *Errors*, both as to *Doctrin* and *Worſhip*, has the *Church* of *Rome* fallen, ſince her *Biſhop* ſet up for *Univerſality*, and thereby Commenc'd that Grand *Schiſm* againſt all the *Biſhops* of the Earth, whom he ſought to *Depreſs* under him; but while he would Thruſt other *Churches* from him, he Thruſt himſelf from the *Catholick Church.*

What Hydra *Hereſies*, and Monſtrous *Sects* (*fifty* or *ſixty* at one time, of which we have the *Names*) flow'd like a *Torrent* into *England*, in the times of *Forty-One*, after *Epiſcopacy* was Thrown down!

So Evident is that ſaying, That the *Church is the Pillar and Ground of the Truth*, that we can hardly find any *Error* which has come into the *Church*, but upon an *Infraction* made upon the *Epiſcopal* Authority.

XIV. *An* Infallible *Demonſtration of* Epiſcopacy.

For which this is to be ſaid, That it has all the *Four Marks* before-menti-on'd, to Aſcertain any *Fact*, in the Concurrent *Teſtimony* of all *Churches*, at all *Times*; And therefore muſt *Infallibly* be the *Government* which the *Apoſtles* left up-

on the Earth. To which we must Adhere, till a Greater *Authority* than *Theirs* shall Alter it.

I doubt not but all this will Determine you to the *Church* of *England*. And keep you Firm to *Episcopacy*, as a Matter not *Indifferent*.

And I Pray *God*, that *He who hath Begun a Good Work in you, may Perfect it until the Day of* JESUS CHRIST. Amen.

July 17. 1704.